Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Do you support letting the CNMI government borrow money to pay off its $231.6 million debt with the Retirement Fund?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

PANDEMIC ALERT STATUS

PHASE 6

As of July 14, 2009

Phase 1: Viruses circulating among animals have yet to cause infections in humans.

Phase 2: An animal influenza virus is causing infection in humans, and is considered a potential pandemic threat.

Phase 3: An animal or human-animal influenza virus has caused sporadic cases or small clusters of disease in people, but has not resulted in human-to-human transmission sufficient to sustain community-level outbreaks.

Phase 4: Verified human-to-human transmission of an animal or human-animal influenza virus able to cause "community-level outbreaks."

Phase 5: A strong signal that a pandemic is imminent and that the time to finalize the organization, communication, and implementation of planned mitigation measures is short.

Phase 6: The pandemic phase, is an indication that a global pandemic is underway.

For more information about the H1N1 flu, contact DPH at 236-8797, Monday to Friday, from 8am to 5pm, 234-8950 during after hours, e-mail cnmipheoc@gmail.com, or visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/.

Source: CNMI Department of Public Health, World Health Organization

INSIDE



Worth the Wait

Harry Potter has kept his fans waiting for two years. It's been worth the wait.

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Fund eyes hike in GHLI premiums. **PAGE 3**

Red Cross-NMI gets $42K grant from Wal-Mart. **PAGE 7**

Medical insurance for under-18 foreign students shelved for now

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Department of Commerce last week adopted emergency regulations that, for the meantime, will not require foreign students under the age of 18 to have medical insurance.

Commerce Secretary Michael J. Ada justified the issuance of the emergency regulations by pointing out that the local insurance industry currently has no medical insurance to cover students.

"The department issued the amendment because the insurance companies did not have a product available to cover 'students.' When we issued the original regulations, we needed to ensure that the students had some sort of health coverage to minimize the financial burden that could become part of [Department of] Public Health receivables absent any coverage. When we released the regs,

See MEDICAL on Page 4

4 MONTHS BEFORE FEDERALIZATION:

Russia market starting to dry up

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Tenorio

With still four months to go before the federal takeover of the local immigration system, the Russian market is already beginning to show a notable decline in arrivals since June, based on the latest Marianas Visitors Authority data.

At the same time, MVA reported yesterday that overall arrivals in June nosedived by 30 percent compared to the same period in 2008.

After showing consecutive monthly increases since last year, Rus-

See RUSSIA on Page 4

House OKs $150.5M budget for FY 2010

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives has approved the concurrent resolution that caps the total budgetary resources for Fiscal Year 2010 at $150.5 million.

During Monday's session, 11 lawmakers supported the concurrent resolution as amended by the Senate. Four representatives—Floor Leader Joseph Camacho, Heinz Hofschneider, Ed Salas, and

See HOUSE on Page 4

Guerrero-Camacho team files candidacy

'Next campaign rallies set in Guam and US'

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Nearly a hundred relatives, friends, and supporters joined the independent team of Juan T. Guerrero and Joseph Camacho yesterday when they submitted their candidacy papers for the November general election.

The two handed over the 2,000-plus signature petitions to Election Commission execu-

See GUERRERO on Page 4



MONETH G. DEPOSA

With their families and supporters looking on, independent candidates Juan T. Guerrero and Joseph Camacho are attended to by Election Commission officials as they file their candidacies yesterday. The tandem is the second to do so since the filing of candidacies opened last Friday, July 10.





Local

‘No expenses yet for litigation’

As autonomous agencies seek to avoid lawsuit

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

To date, not a single penny has been paid to a law firm that the Retirement Fund hired in January 2009 to pursue the Fund’s $1.9 million collection from CNMI autonomous agencies.

Last week, Fund board of trustees chair Juan T. Guerrero informed Sen. Maria Frica Pangelinan, chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Fiscal Affairs, about the board’s decision to enter into an agreement with a private law firm in order to collect on deficient employer contributions of autonomous agencies.

Although three lawyers—William Fitzgerald, Mark Hanson, and Bruce Berline—have entered into the agreement, in effect it is one firm who will be handling the litigation, if any, said Guerrero in his letter to Pangelinan. The letter was included in the agenda during the House’s session on Monday.

At present, Guerreero said, no money has been spent for litigation against any of the autonomous agencies.

Seven autonomous agencies are reportedly behind in their employment contributions, with outstanding collectibles projected at $1.9 million by the end of the fiscal year. The Public School System tops the Fund’s debtor list among autonomous agencies.

Pangelinan had inquired with the Fund in May 2009 about the hiring of the law firm.

Guerrero said Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo’s recent finding that the CNMI government owes the Fund $231.6 million in damages is a major accomplishment in protecting the Fund’s assets and quantifying the amount owed by the government.

“As such, autonomous agencies have approached the Fund in an effort to avoid litigation and enter into a consent decree for their respective deficient employer contributions—a move embraced, sought after, and very much welcomed by the board,” he said.

See NO on Page 3

The General Public Is Invited to Attend a Free Lecture on the Study of Prehistoric Human Remains

WHO: Michael Pietrusewsky Ph.D., Guest Lecturer

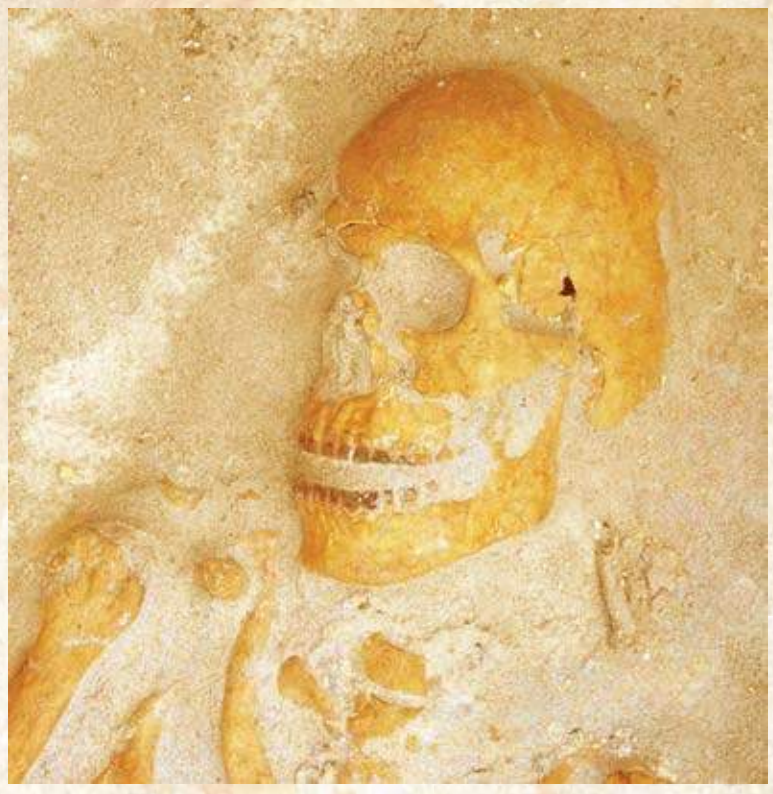
WHAT: Lecture on Bio-anthropological Studies and General Health of the Prehistoric Populations in the Mariana Islands with an Emphasis on Saipan.

WHERE: American Memorial Park Auditorium - Garapan

WHEN: 6-8 pm, July 18, 2009

WHY: Dr. Pietrusewsky’s lecture will include an assessment of community health (life expectancies, fertility, stature), and disease (dental pathologies, healed fractures, spondylolysis) for the Mariana Islands with an emphasis on Saipan studies. The lecture will be visually assisted by a power point presentation which will illustrate examples of skeletal attributes or pathologies.

The morning of the 18 , between 8:00 am and 11:00 am, SHARC and Dr. Pietrusewsky will provideth a tour for the Northern Marianas College students of Sam McPhetres History Class and interested members of the public. Interested persons should meet at the Dolphin Wholesale Parking lot in San Jose and may contact Marilyn Swift at 235-6287 for more information.



Please note: This project is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, or conclusions expressed in this lecture are those of the presenter and do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for Humanities nor the Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities.

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
P.O. BOX 501370 CK, SAIPAN, MP 96950
HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

PROMOTIONAL AND OPEN COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT

It is the policy of the Board of Education, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, that the Public School Personnel System shall be applied and administered according to the principles of equal employment opportunity as defined by the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Public Law 6 - 10, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, handicap or place of origin. Applicants for this position must be a U.S. Citizen or be eligible and authorized to work in the U.S., including the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Announcement No: PSS – **2009 - 052** Application & Employment Type: **Non-Certified**
Position Title: **LEGAL COUNSEL**
Pay Level/Step: **UNGRADED** Per Annum Salary: **$40,000.00-$60,000.00**
Opening Date: **JULY 2, 2009** Closing Date: **JULY 17, 2009**
Location: **PSS – BOARD OF EDUCATION**
Benefits: Salary Commensurate with qualifications and experience, plus excellent benefits (including Life Insurance, Retirement Benefits, and Paid Leave/Holidays
Minimum Requirements:
Graduation from an U.S. accredited college or university with a Juris Doctorate degree. Applicant must be a member in good standing of the CNMI bar or a member of a state bar and qualify to practice law in the CNMI. The applicant must also have at least five (5) years legal work experience, preferably for government entities handling government contracts and/or education issues.

***Detailed job description with qualification requirements can be obtained at PSS Human Resources Office at the 3rd Floor Retirement Building, Capitol Hill, or download it online www.pss.cnmi.mp/humanresources**

INTERESTED APPLICANTS MAY OBTAIN A DETAILED JOB DESCRIPTION WITH QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION FORMS AT THE PSS HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE AT THE 3rd FLOOR RETIREMENT BUILDING, CAPITOL HILL. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MUST BE ATTACHED TO COMPLETE APPLICATION FORMS: (1) COPY OF DIPLOMA/DEGREE, (2) TRANSCRIPTS, (3) POLICE CLEARANCE (FROM PLACE OF RESIDENCE FOR PAST SIX MONTHS), (4) VERIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT LETTER, (5) RESUME, AND (6) TEACHING CERTIFICATE (IF APPLICABLE).COMPLETED APPLICATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MAY BE SUBMITTED TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE OR MAILED TO: CNMI PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, ATTN: HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE, RETIREMENT BUILDING; THIRD FLOOR, P.O. BOX 501370 CK, SAIPAN, MP 96950, and TEL. #. (670) 237-3051, FAX # (670) 664-3707. ALSO VISIT http://www.pss.cnmi.mp/humanresources ON THE WORLDWIDE WEB.

Fund eyes hike in GHLI premiums

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Government employees who are members of the Group Health and Life Insurance program may soon pay higher premiums once the Retirement Fund board of trustees approves the recommendation of its third-party administrator to increase contributions.

Fund board chair Juan T. Guerrero said that Aetna Global Benefits, which has been running the program since July 2006, had recommended the increased premiums.

During a recent meeting, a proposal to amend the GHLI regulations was presented to the trustees to change the existing sharing ratio of the CNMI government and its employees from 80/20 to 50/50. This was immediately deferred for action and assigned for committee review.

Guerrero said yesterday they want to discuss the idea first with the Legislature and the Fitial administration.

"I wanted to make sure that before we make any action, the administration and the Legislature were informed about it…because we're avoiding finger-pointing in the end. Communication to both parties is basically the reason for the deferment," he said.

When the administration of the health insurance program was transferred to Aetna and privatized in November 2007, the following rates were applied:

For single employees, the government share for each retiree is $26 semi-monthly and $23.53 bi-weekly for active employees, while the subscriber share for a retiree is $58.95 and $54.89 for active employees.

For couples, the government share is $52.35 for retiree and $48.23 for an active member, while the subscriber's share is $121.91 for retirees and $112.53 for active members.

For families, the government's share is $81.55 for retirees and $75.28 for active members, while the subscriber's share is $190.30 for retirees and $175.66 for active members.

These ratios translate to an 80-percent government share versus a subscriber's share of 20 percent.

"Aetna's recommendation is to decrease the government participation to 50 percent—from 80 percent—and increase the employee's share from 20 percent to 50 percent. The proposal will equalize the premium health contributions of both parties," Guerrero said.

Aetna had said that this approach will ensure the stability of the health insurance for employees, he added.

"This is critical because we're trying to keep the health insurance coverage going and afloat. Aetna said the costs continue to escalate because there are more people getting sick…and they're spending more for their coverage," Guerrero said.

Last week, Guerrero disclosed that Aetna had threatened to cancel the insurance coverage of employees if it will not be paid by the government in its runoff claims, amounting to $122,000.

The Legislature has passed a bill addressing Aetna's concern. As of yesterday, the bill has yet to be acted on by the governor.

Guerrero said the Fund is opting to exercise "better communication" with the executive and legislative branches of government before executing any plans or decisions.

The GHLI program is open to active employees who worked at least 20 hours per week and retired CNMI government employees who retire as a result of length of service, disability or age, as well as their dependents.

Premiums paid by the government and the subscribers are remitted to the GHLI trust fund, which then remits all contributions to Aetna after deducting a 1 percent surcharge.

NO

From Page 2

Guerrero said the decision to enter into an agreement with the law firm on possible litigation versus autonomous agencies was at the advice of the board counsel.

He said the board counsel believes that assistance may be needed for the added litigation should an agreement with autonomous agencies is not reached.

The chairman stressed that the board reserves the right to terminate the agreement with the law firm, with or without cause.

"If, in fact, autonomous agencies enter into an agreement with the Fund to address their deficient employer contributions without the need to resort to litigation, please rest assured that the agreement will be promptly terminated," Guerrero said.

He said they are serious about their duties and responsibilities because they are entrusted with the highest and unquestionable duty to each and every member of the Fund that they intend to seek, through negotiations and litigation, if necessary, to protect the Fund's assets.

"It is for this very reason that the board entered into this agreement," Guerrero added.

Legal Notice

If You Paid for TriCor or Any Cholesterol Drug Containing Fenofibrate

You May Be Entitled to Money from a Class Action Settlement

A settlement has been proposed in a class action lawsuit alleging that TriCor manufacturers engaged in anticompetitive conduct regarding fenofibrate drugs. Fenofibrate drugs are used to treat high cholesterol and high triglyceride levels in patients at risk of cardiovascular disease.

No question is raised about the safety or effectiveness of TriCor or other fenofibrate drugs.

Defendants have denied any wrongdoing and liability but have agreed to the proposed settlement to resolve the controversy and to avoid the cost and expense of further litigation. The lawsuit, *In re TriCor Indirect Purchaser Antitrust Litigation*, C.A. No. 05-360 (SLR), is pending in U.S. District Court for the District of Delaware.

You may have important legal rights under this settlement, some of which you must act on by **September 15, 2009**.

Who is included?

The class includes consumers and insurance companies that purchased, paid for, or reimbursed purchases of fenofibrate products intended for consumption by yourself or your family, or, in the case of third-party payors, by members, employees, plan participants and beneficiaries or insureds, between April 9, 2002 and May 8, 2009. These products include TriCor, Lofibra, Antara, Triglide, and any available generic versions of these drugs.

What does the settlement provide?

The settlement provides $65.7 million to pay to class members. It will be distributed according to the settlement. Any award for attorneys' fees, expenses, and notice and administration costs will be deducted from this amount.

What are my legal rights?

- **Remain in the class and file a claim**. Claim forms must be postmarked by **September 15, 2009**. You will be bound by the terms of the settlement and you give up the right to sue at your own expense.
- **Remain in the class but object to (or comment on) the settlement**. If the settlement is approved and your objection is rejected, you are bound by the settlement terms and you will receive payment from the settlement fund (if you also file a claim). Objections and comments must be postmarked by **September 15, 2009** and they will be considered at a Fairness Hearing on **October 9, 2009**. If you want to appear at the settlement hearing, you must send in a written request for appearance postmarked by **September 25, 2009**.
- **Exclude yourself** and keep your right to sue at your own expense. Requests for exclusion must be postmarked by **September 15, 2009**.
- **Do nothing.** You remain in the class and give up your right to sue at your own expense. You will not receive any money unless you submit a claim.

The Court will determine whether to approve the settlement and attorneys' fees at a Fairness Hearing scheduled on **October 9, 2009 at 1:30 p.m.**

This is only a summary of the Proposed Settlement.
For complete information and a claim form:

Visit: www.TricorSettlement.com Call: 1-877-567-3014

Write: TriCor Indirect Purchasers Antitrust Litigation, c/o Rust Consulting, Inc., P.O. Box 24797, West Palm Beach, FL 33416

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Fitial approves call center's QC

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has approved the qualifying certificate of the island's first call center business for its $3.2 million expansion plan.

Under the Investment Act of 2000, the CNMI government through the Commonwealth Development Authority can provide companies up to 100 percent tax benefits to encourage new businesses.

PTI Services Inc. was allowed to get a rebate of the business gross revenue tax paid to the government for 20 years, which is equal to 5 percent of total wages and salaries paid.

The governor also approved a 100 percent abatement of excise taxes for three years as well as maximum abatement of the developer infrastructure tax.

The approved certificate indicates that, if at any time during the rebate and abatement periods, the total combined benefits received by the company exceeds $3.2 million, the privilege will automatically cease.

Besides compliance with local and federal rules, the company is also mandated to employ 20 percent of local residents in its workforce and must maintain the spirit of a community-conscious and civic-minded corporate citizen of the CNMI.

Part of the QC conditions is also the donation of $25,000 for the establishment of a scholarship program for public and private high school students.

PTI Services Inc. filed its QC application in March.

The company intends to spend about $3.2 million to expand and operate its center in Susupe.

Currently, the call center firm has 40 seats. The expansion will increase this to 300 seats, translating to more jobs.

RUSSIA

From Page 1

sian arrivals fell 43 percent last month, with only 478 tourists arriving from the destination.

In a statement issued yesterday, MVA attributed the drastic decline to a "wrong impression" that a federalized immigration is now being enforced in the Commonwealth.

Federalization was supposed to start on June 1, as mandated by law, but the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, at the urging of local leaders, agreed to delay this by 180 days, or until Nov. 28 this year.

Under the impending federal takeover, a Russian tourist needs to procure a U.S. visa to visit the Commonwealth. This follows the Homeland Security decision to exclude Russia and China from the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver program.

"After such extraordinary performance in the Russian market since its inception, June's arrival numbers were a reality check," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio, adding that this is a strong indication of what will happen to the market if the CNMI does not keep visa waivers for Russia when the new federalization implementation deadline arrives on Nov. 28.

"We can see that without visa waivers, the Russian market will dry out very quickly for us," he added.

MVA said the average Russian visitor spends considerably more and stays longer than visitors from other major markets of the CNMI.

Besides federalization concerns, MVA said that Russian travel agents are also finding it difficult to sell the CNMI due to stiff competition from other destinations such as the Maldives, which offers 50 percent discount on travel packages.

Double-digit declines

Saipan Tribune learned that arrivals from all major markets registered double digit declines in June. Visitor arrivals to the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota registered 21,803 last month, compared to 30,936 in June 2008. Overall, the fiscal year total to date is -7.57 percent fewer visitors than the same period in 2008.

Arrivals from the primary market of Japan dropped by 30 percent last month to 11,152, compared to the 15,904 visitors posted in June 2008. The drop was attributed to school and family trip cancellations and the suspension or postponement of business travel because of the H1N1 flu virus, combined with the lagging global economy.

However, MVA is optimistic that the demand for Japanese summer travel is shifting from August to September, with the five-day string of national holidays from Sept. 19 to 23, dubbed "Silver Week."

For September alone, MVA said travel partners in Japan indicate that bookings to the CNMI are up substantially over 2008 arrivals.

Arrivals from Korea also fell by 30 percent last month, with only 6,735 visitors. According to the Korea Tourism Organization, the number of total outbound travelers from Korea in May was 737,396, a decrease of 33 percent compared to the same month of last year.

Meanwhile, the Bank of Korea says the Korean economy "seems to have escaped from a big shock, but is still sluggish."

The International Monetary Fund projects that the Korean economy will turn positive in 2010, with a 2.5 percent growth and a faster-than-expected recovery of the global economy.

Saipan Tribune also learned that arrivals from China plummeted 72 percent to 322 visitors. Losses were also seen in visitor arrivals from Guam, Taiwan, and the Philippines.

Meantime, arrivals from the United States gained 14 percent to 858, and other areas nudged up 1 percent to 519.

MEDICAL

From Page 1

insurance companies began to develop the student policies, but the process takes time," he said.

In an effort to provide immediate coverage for student's health costs, Ada said that Commerce is looking at the issuance of bonds as a way to guarantee payment of health costs.

"We are going to keep the bonds as an option through regular amendments as a backup if a student proves insurable through the normal student policies once they become available," he said.

In the meantime, schools that cater to foreign students can purchase accident insurance or the bond Commerce is pushing for their wards 18 years old and under.

Ladera International School principal Wayne Pangelinan said the emergency regulation takes care of the insurance requirements for their under-18 foreign students. However, he laments the fact that costly medical insurance will continue to be required for their adult ones.

"The student who is an adult, I can see the difficulty in acquiring medical insurance. The government is only trying to protect itself with unpaid medical services. I think that is perfectly fine; however, it does pose a burden on those that cannot afford an extra, say $200 per month, then this practice for insurance is unacceptable as it will not work," he said.

Pangelinan argued that even before the medical insurance requirement, LISS didn't have problems with the health coverage of its students.

"Minors are different because the parents, whether abroad or on-island, usually have insurance coverage. Now I speak for myself as we do not allow nor accept any child without proper medical insurance coverage from their place of origin. It is a bit longer process for us since the carrier [insurance] is off-island, so we at LISS pay up front for medical services for our students and then reimburse later from the insurance company directly. How others do it I am not sure."

He is still glad, however, that Commerce issued the emergency regulations and that its chief continues to listen to the recommendations of schools.

"With regard to the amendment, more is needed to address the adult issues. The education-tourism aspect is not only built for minors but for adults as well that can avail of education services with the college and any other institution on-island that is approved by Commerce to accept foreign nationals," he said.

Eucon International School and College president Dr. Christian Wei, for his part, commended the move by Commerce and said the emergency regulations was partly a result of the department listening to the schools' pleas.

"The change is partially our effort since the health insurance is too expensive and will slow down the marketing. With the surety bond, which will be very similar to the contract workers', most of the students and parents will be paying less than $50 a year…and it will be much easier to continue this kind of ministry," he said.

The amended regulations calling for the temporary shelving of the medical insurance for 18-and-under students will be in effect for 120 days.

GUERRERO

From Page 1

tive director Robert Guerrero at 11am inside the jam-packed office of the commission.

Their team was the second to file their intention to run for the two top positions in government this November. Four groups had earlier announced their election bids.

The tandem of Ramon Guerrero and David Borja, along with their supporters, filed on the first day of filing election candidacies.

Expected to show up in the next few weeks are Republican Party standard bearers Heinz Hofschneider and Arnold Palacios and incumbents Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos of the Covenant Party.

Off-island campaign

In an interview with *Saipan Tribune* yesterday, Guerrero disclosed that their campaign will covers huge rallies not only on Saipan, Rota and Tinian but other U.S. states where a vast number of CNMI voters live.

Last Sunday, the two held a campaign rally on Rota. They are scheduled to fly to Guam this weekend for a series of campaign rallies with absentee voters. Their supporters on Tinian are also expected to host the tandem next weekend.

"In August, we're leaving for the U.S. and spending three weeks with our CNMI voters there," Guerrero told Saipan Tribune, adding that it is the team's goal to keep their election campaign "clean" until the end.

Platform

Guerrero said the economy remains at the top of their platform, which includes better promotion for the tourism industry, CUC development, education and health issues, as well as essential services like public safety and the environment.

"A good economy interacts with having a stable utility…. and that's one of the major areas we're prioritizing in our platform. Because tourism is the only industry left for the CNMI, there's a need to create better promotional strategies that would attract air seats. It is where communication with airlines will come in," he said.

Guerrero, who is the current chairman of the CNMI Retirement Fund board of trustees, believes that he's can offer better solutions to the present "mess."

"Who else is much better to address the Retirement problem than somebody who knows and had dedicated time to help it? With my experience with the board of trustees, I believe I can offer better help," he said.

The Fund recently won a case against the central government regarding the over $200 million unpaid employer contributions to the Fund. Negotiation on the payment plan is now ongoing between the two parties.

Guerrero admitted that his resignation from the board may come in before he can be certified as an official candidate.

'Low-cost campaign'

Guerrero described his team's election campaign as on a "low-cost budget."

"We're trying to stay below the previous election expenditures. …We're working on a low budget and we even take our personal monies for some of our campaign expenses," he told *Saipan Tribune.*

Guerrero emphasized the team's philosophy: "We're asking for votes…not buying your votes."

If elected, Guerrero said his administration will work closely with CNMI Rep. Gregorio "Kilili" Sablan on tapping federal assistance to help sustain the needs of public education and the hospital.

"We're a new team. We're not in office…and we haven't done a lot of the same mistakes that they're making. What makes us different from the rest is we're willing to do our best and we will give 100 percent of our attention to the CNMI and people's needs," he said.

Camacho expressed the team's appreciation to the support extended by their families, friends, and people in the communities.

"We will continue the hard work and we're moving forward. We're meeting people in their homes [and] on the streets, talking about our platforms and policies. We're doing our best, and we're very optimistic….on our chances," he said.

House visits

The team's campaign manager, Clyde Norita, said that between weekend rallies, the two will continue to visit residents in villages.

At present, Guerrero and Camacho are doing house-to-house visits in Precinct 2, covering Chalan Kanoa and Susupe.

Norita assured that the candidates are serious in their vow that "no house will be left behind" in their campaign.

"We have a very good chance…because both of these individuals are not career politicians. At this point in time, we need true leaders because the state of the CNMI is not where we want it to be," Norita added.

HOUSE

From Page 1

Tina Sablan—voted against it. Five lawmakers were absent.

Sablan expressed "deep disappointment" with the Senate's decision to delete the House amendment that would have set aside $1.6 million for the Retirement Fund, saying this was already required by law and further required by a court order.

The amount represents the 30 percent hotel occupancy tax and 20 percent alcoholic beverage container tax the government is being required to pay the Fund.

Sablan said she understands that retirees were encouraged by the House's action last week when they inserted a provision for an additional $1.69 million obligation. That House's action, she said, showed that lawmakers do take the court order seriously and understand the larger crisis facing the Retirement Fund.

Rep. Diego Benavente disagreed. He said he believes that the Senate was just following the process. "And the process here is that when legislation projects a revenue, it has to include all of those revenues," Benavente said, adding that Sablan's concern should be entertained in the budget deliberation process.

Rep. Ray Yumul, chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means, said lawmakers still have other opportunities to address Fund concerns in the budget legislation itself.

Yumul said the obligation to the Fund is still very much alive and members of his committee will sit down and go through the entire resources of the government "vigorously." He said the committee will attempt to pass legislation that will meet the needs of not just government operations but also the Fund's concerns.

Hofschneider said the CNMI Constitution implies an effective mandate on a concurrent resolution.

"The concern of the Retirement Fund, as earlier pointed out, is a commitment under the existing law for many years. [Now] it is in fact a court order or judgment," Hofschneider said. "I will not support the budget if it does not put the segregation of those funds specifically for the Retirement Fund."

Sablan said the $1.6 million that the House wants to set aside for the Fund is only a fraction of the total judgment of $231.6 million owed the Fund.

"Lacking any clear understanding at this point why the Senate insisted on removing this, I find it very difficult to endorse this," Sablan said.

Speaker Arnold Palacios said they can take out the $1.6 million from the concurrent resolution, but he hopes that the budget process will reflect that commitment to the Fund.

Bill filed for CUC to hire more alien workers

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Francisco S. Dela Cruz has introduced a bill that will allow the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to hire more alien workers to "ensure the smooth transition" of electric power generation after the September 2009 expiration of CUC's contract with Aggreko.

Dela Cruz's House Bill 16-264, introduced during Monday's House session, will repeal Public Law 16-14, which bars CUC from hiring above the 19 non-U.S. citizen technical workers who are presently employed with the agency.

Under the proposed bill, engineers, professional, skilled, and trainer positions in the engineering, accounting, information technology, technical, and trade areas at CUC will be exempted and may be filled by foreign workers.

The proposed measure provides CUC authority to ink a contract with manpower services or directly hire needed personnel.

Dela Cruz said the exemption to hire alien workers will expire on Sept. 30, 2010.

When CUC's contract with Aggreko for temporary electric power generation expires in September, CUC will not have enough staff levels to operate the Saipan and Rota power plants due to the possible loss of 16 skilled workers.

CUC has been unable to fill critical positions with permanent residents or U.S. citizen employees that have both the education and experience required.

Adopting CUC's report provided by CUC executive director Antonio Muña, Dela Cruz noted that from pay period numbers two to 11 of 2009, the agency accumulated 18,053 hours of overtime (worth $255,842) from employees in positions working 40 or more hours.

"Such extreme hours result in inefficiencies and poor work quality," the lawmaker said.

Sen. Paul Manglona, chairman of the Senate Committee on Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications, said yesterday they are looking at CUC's request.

"I know for a fact that we have a lot of retired mechanics and electricians that formerly worked with CUC. I know we have a constitutional prohibition from double dipping, but I believe there is a way where, for example, retirees can form a company and we contract the services of this company," Manglona said.

The senator said an apprenticeship program or on-the-job training was always mentioned in the past in order for locals to get them these jobs.

" I don't believe that we cannot do anything about this because at the Public Auditor's Office, we used to have 90 percent nonresidents," he said.

Manglona said when Mike Sablan came in as public auditor, he vowed to train and look for qualified local residents to take over the positions.

"What a success story at OPA! Practically everyone at OPA is local and we have a lot of bright students in California, all over the U.S. that, if given the opportunity and reasonable salary, would come back with experience or with the capability of being trained," he said.

Manglona said he wants to see a similar commitment not only at CUC but at the Department of Public Works and other agencies.

"I want to see a commitment from the top management. So that we don't have to go after year after year and we know that it is difficult in the future to hire nonresidents. I don't believe that we don't have people out there that can be trained or armed with experience to come in and help," he said.

UWM seeks Brown's help on guest worker issues

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Guest worker groups in the CNMI are seeking the help of Federal Ombudsman Pamela Brown on their many concerns, even as they congratulated her for her reappointment to the post.

In a letter to Brown, the United Workers Movement-NMI reminded her of her previous work to protect the rights of contract workers in the CNMI.

"[Your] being renamed ombudsman gives all contract workers hope and courage for the future," said the group in the letter signed by president Rabby Syed and chairman Ronnie Doca.

UWM is a coalition of guest worker groups.

The group said that things have changed drastically in the CNMI and that immigration and labor will soon be under the control of the federal government. During this transition period, they said contract workers are experiencing hardships and are weighted down by different rules and regulations adopted by the CNMI Department of Labor and the Immigration Division.

"We need your help," UWM stated.

Syed recalled that it was during Brown's time when the report of the $6.1 million in unpaid wages came out.

Syed said that they will also ask the help of CNMI Rep. Gregorio "Kilili" Sablan to look into this.

"We want him to work out for a special litigation to cover these guest workers," he said.

Syed urged all guest workers to come forward and provide UWM with documentation so that they can start preparing for a petition to the U.S. Congress.

Syed can be contacted at 989-3306.

"We would like to bring to your attention that there are countless workers still waiting for unpaid wage awards. With the upcoming federalization and many uncertainties surrounding the current situation, we are asking you to take these concerns to the proper authorities," UWM told Brown.

The worker groups said it is alarming that people with unpaid labor awards are being deported but they believe that with Brown's help, they can retain their right to collect their labor awards in person in the CNMI.

"We beg you to take our concerns to the proper authorities so that no contract worker with an unpaid labor award is deported," UWM said.

They also want her to look into the ways Labor is applying guest worker rules and regulations in the run-up to federalization.

For instance, they said the $50 charge for extension to look for a job is an extreme hardship for guest workers.

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Dinner 18:00 ~ 21:00 $25.00 adult & $12.50 child



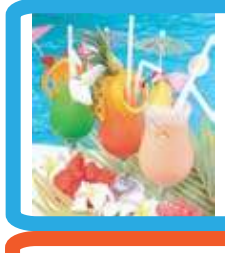
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2009

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13th Rota Municipal Council



BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy birthday to Beverly M. Camacho, who is celebrating her special day today. May you enjoy your day with laughter and fun with all the joyous moments you will have. God bless and may you have more birthdays to come. We love you Mom! You're the greatest! Greetings coming from your loving husband Francisco M. Camacho, Kimmy, Breanna, Frankie, Shawn, Vanessa, Shalei and the familia!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Happy birthday greetings go out to Jojo Felix, who is celebrating his 30th birthday today. Greetings come from his friends at Coke and Subway.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pesticide amnesty starts tomorrow on Saipan

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
Pesticide amnesty coordinator Reina Camacho briefs the media on the collection schedules of the program at the Kagman Agricultural Station yesterday. Looking on is Christopher Weden from the U,S, Environmental Protection Agency and Agriculture director Richard B. Seman.

Farmers as well as hotel and golf course operators in the CNMI can avoid hefty penalties if they surrender unregulated or unauthorized pesticides during an amnesty disposal program this week on Saipan, Rota and Tinian.

Officials from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which funded the program, are on Saipan to help the Division of Environmental Quality collect these pesticides and related hazardous waste that require disposal due to age, condition of containers, contamination, no labels, unregistered or cancellation.

Christopher Weden of the U.S. EPA Emergency Response Section-Superfund Program said the pesticide amnesty cleanup would give local farmers a clean slate and immediate help in transporting and disposing of these unwanted or unlabeled pesticides and containers.

The three-day amnesty will start at 8am until 4pm tomorrow, July 16, in two collection sites on Saipan. These are at the Kagman Agricultural Station and at the Koblerville Fire station.

The schedule on Rota would be on Friday, July 17, at the Sunset Villa property and on Tinian on Saturday, July 18, at the Department of Public Works grounds.

CONTACT INFO
DEQ: 664-8500
DLNR: 256-3318
SMA: 234-6208
NMC-CREES: 234-5498

The items collected would be brought to Guam for consolidation with other collected items there before being transported to a treatment and disposal storage site in California.

"This is a consolidated effort, the most extensive collection through the joint efforts of the EPA Region, CNMI DEQ, DLNR, and NMC," said Weden during a news briefing yesterday at the Saipan Agricultural Station in Kagman.

Present at the briefing were pesticide amnesty coordinator Reina Camacho, DEQ deputy director David Rosario, EPA pesticides officer Marcy Katzin, Agriculture director Richard Seman, Sabalu Market Association secretary Asap Ogumoro and officers from the U.S. Coast Guard.

Camacho urged those with unregulated or unlabeled pesticides to get rid of their stocks now because violators may be fined up to $25,000 per day per violation.

"It's a huge penalty depending on the severity of the violation," she said. "This is the opportunity for farmers to dispose of their pesticides legally."

Katzin said that DEQ will be reviving the pesticide regulation and market inspection in the future.

According to estimates, a person will spend around $1,000 for transportation costs alone if he chooses to dispose of pesticides by himself.

Ogumuro said members of the farmers' association support these efforts because they have been looking for ways to reduce their farming cost.

"We're trying to promote the use of organic methods to increase production and find ways to reduce our cost," he said.

Weden said this effort will also make the CNMI healthy as it will clean up the islands of pesticides that had been stored for a long time.

This will also allow businesses or individuals that have pesticide products that do not have a registration number with the EPA or an EPA establishment number the chance to safely discard these products without penalties.

Misuse or not following the instructions on the label of pesticides will harm not only the person applying pesticides but others in the area as well. DEQ said such practice could negatively impact groundwater, especially among islanders who are struggling to protect their only source of drinking water.

For the kind of pesticides and containers to be disposed of, call the DEQ at 664-8500, DLNR at 256-3318, SMA at 234-6208 and NMC-CREES at 234-5498.



Red Cross-NMI gets $42K grant from Wal-Mart

The NMI Chapter of the American Red Cross has received a $42,000 grant from the Wal-Mart Foundation, to be used to purchase disaster relief supplies to be prepositioned on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. The NMI Chapter is one of 128 Red Cross chapters awarded funds as part of the Wal-Mart Foundation's initiative to support disaster response and capacity building projects nationwide.

J.D. Tenorio, the Emergency Services director of the NMI Chapter, said the Walmart grant could not have come at a better time, given today's economic uncertainties.

"Despite the fact that Wal-Mart does not even have a store here in the CNMI, they were willing to help our community out. This really is testament to Wal-Mart's grassroots beginnings and their belief in giving back to the public. This should serve as an example to other non-profit and government agencies. Anything is possible. There is money out there, it's just a matter of finding it and taking the necessary steps to get it," said Tenorio.

The Wal-Mart Foundation partnered with the American Red Cross to create a $5 million Disaster Readiness and Capacity Building Grant Program. This grant will benefit communities across the country that reside near Red Cross chapters located in remote areas that often become isolated during times of disaster and whose chartered jurisdictions serve less than one million people, like the NMI Chapter.

The grant will be used to buy clean-up kits, rakes, shovels, and other disaster relief supplies that will be prepositioned on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. The grant will also be used to fund the training of new and existing volunteers in the areas of disaster services.

"At Wal-Mart, helping communities is what we do every day. And when a crisis strikes, that charge becomes an even greater priority," said Margaret Mckenna, president of the Wal-Mart Foundation. "Our long-standing support of the American Red Cross is evidence of our commitment to supporting local disaster relief efforts. We are hopeful that the $5 million we have given to local Red Cross chapters across the country will result in the swift, effective response to disasters, and the development of resources *before* disaster strikes."

The Wal-Mart Foundation works with the American Red Cross and other organizations in an effort to help its neighbors and communities during times of need.

"We are appreciative to the Wal-Mart Foundation for this much needed grant to enhance our local chapters' ability to serve their communities," said Michael Brown, vice president of Corporate and Foundation Partnerships at the American Red Cross. "Because of their generous support, we will be better positioned to prevent, prepare for and respond to disasters in communities across the country." ***(ARC)***

New law clarifies Probation Reform Act

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Acting Gov. Eloy S. Inos has signed into law a bill that removes sections of the Probation Reform Act of 2006 that were found to be duplicative and may cause confusion in its implementation.

Inos on Monday informed Senate President Pete P. Reyes and House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios that he signed into law House Bill 16-179, HDI, SDI. This bill now becomes Public Law 16-42.

Authored by Rep. Rosemond Santos, the legislation is expected to benefit the Office of Adult Probation as it ensures that persons placed on probation are required to pay a probation fee.

The new law will not incur any substantial costs to the government as it only clarifies certain sections of the Probation Act of 2006.

Under this new law, the Public Defender shall establish eligibility criteria (to receive legal assistance) and may promulgate rules and regulations on eligibility criteria, to take effect upon their approval by the governor.

The new measure states that the "determination as to whether a defendant be indigent or whether a person is unable to afford a private attorney, however, shall be at the discretion of the judge before whom such person is appearing."

According to the new law, a person placed under probation supervision (pre-trial services or post-sentence supervision), investigation or house arrest shall pay a probation service fee in a sum not less than $20 and not more than $360 annually.

The current probation service fee is from $20 to $100.

In determining the fee, the court shall consider the nature of the offense, the level of supervision, and investigation required.

The fee shall be deposited in the Probation Services Fund. A late fee not to exceed 20 percent of the fee imposed shall be assessed for a late renewal.

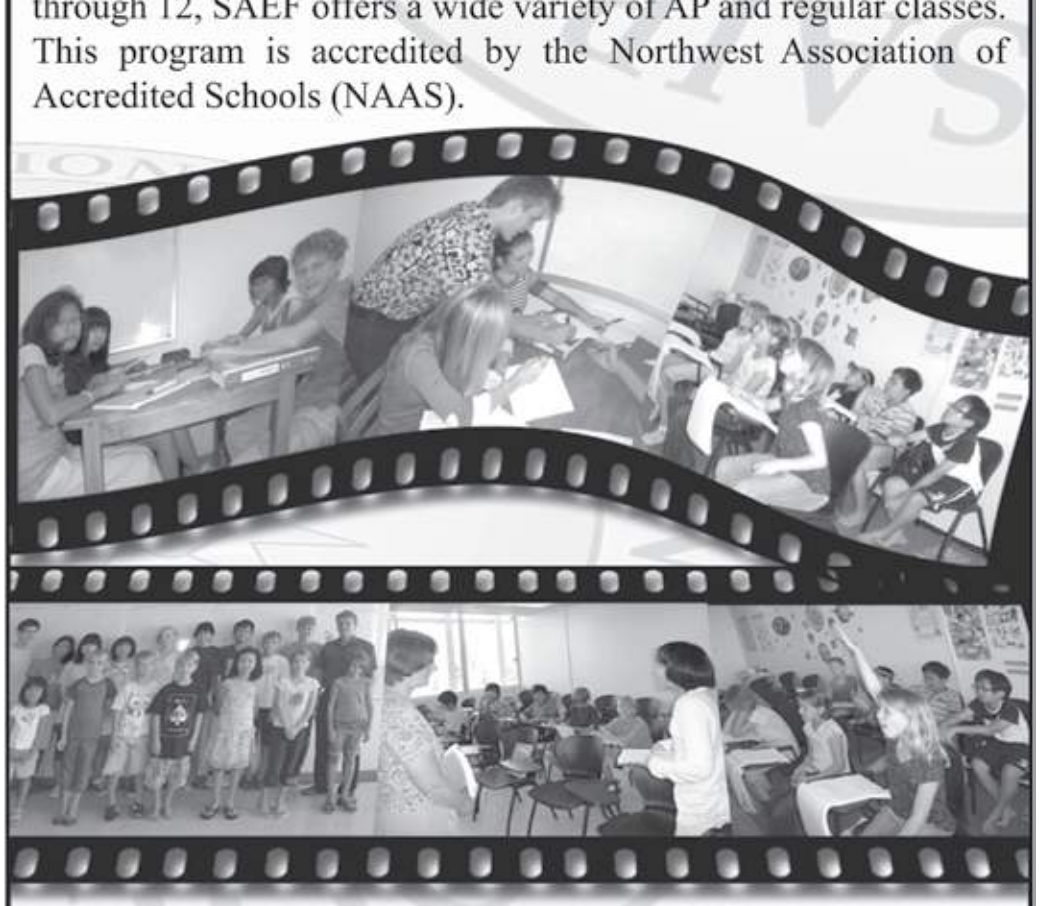
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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Jury selection cancelled

This is to inform all prospective jurors for Panel "DS" that jury selections scheduled for July 20, 2009, at 8:30am in courtroom 202A are hereby cancelled until further notice. For further information, contact jury coordinator Dora SN. Decena or deputy clerk Rosie Ada at 236-9765. ***(PR)***

Attention to MHS Class of 1979

The first official 1979 class reunion meeting will be held this Friday, July 17, at Irene Takai Camacho's Dandan house at 6pm. Preparation for the 30th year class reunion will be discussed and decided. Dips & chips and BYOB. Call Irene at 288-2596 or Joe Kaipat at 664-8509 between 8am to 3pm for details. ***(PR)***

WESPAC schedules meetings

Fishermen and other members of the public are invited to participate in the following meetings of the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, which manages offshore fisheries in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and other U.S. Pacific insular areas.

- The Scientific and Statistical Committee will convene 8:30am to 5pm, July 20 to 22, 2009.
- The Council Standing Committee will meet from 1pm to 5pm, July 22.
- The full Council will meet at 6:30pm to 9:30pm, July 22; 8:30am to 6pm, July 23; 8:30am to 5:30pm, July 24; and 8:30am to 5pm, July 25.

All meetings will be held at the King Kamehameha Kona Beach Hotel, 75-5660 Palani Road, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. Public comment periods are available during the meetings. Written testimonies are also accepted.

Major agenda items include fishing regulations in the new Pacific marine national monuments, Hancock Seamount groundfish fishery moratorium, main Hawaiian Islands bottomfish total allowable catch, catch shares, annual catch limits for species with known maximum sustainable yields, Hawaii offshore non-longline pelagic fisheries, longline tuna quota management and tuna quota monitoring.

For more information or agendas, visit www.wpcouncil.org or contact Council staff at info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov or phone (808) 522-8220; in Guam, John Calvo, (671) 649-3150 or 688-6400; in the CNMI, Jack Ogumoro, (670) 322-9830 or 287-9482. ***(PR)***



www.saipantribune.com

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

July 15, 1999

Lower budget would hurt operations—DPS

Officials of the Department of Public Safety griped yesterday on what they claim as meager budget set aside by the government for the next fiscal year, warning that lower spending level would hamper their operations to maintain peace and order on the island. In a nearly three-hour budget hearing conducted by the House Ways and Means Committee, DPS prodded legislators to reinstate the funding level that they approved last year to ensure continued delivery of services to the community. Acting DPS Commissioner Vicente T. Seman said the department would be able to operate effectively with an appropriation of $14.3 million.

Reyes: No additional funding for DPS

Rep. Karl T. Reyes, chair of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, yesterday ruled out any increase in the budget appropriation for the Department of Public Safety, saying they may provide flexibility to the administration to juggle government resources to accommodate its needs. "With the limited amount of funding this time, we will probably want to give a greater flexibility to the governor in reprogramming some of the funds from one category to another," he said in an interview after the budget hearing on DPS. This will also allow leeway for agencies and departments to use lapse funds within their respective organization which they can use to meet their needs for FY 2000.

July 15, 2002

Torres turns over Jordan probe to OPA

The House Committee on Ways and Means turned over to the Office of the Public Auditor the task of investigating the employment contract of Special Assistant for CIP Management Charles Jordan. In a letter dated July 12, committee Chair Rep. Stanley T. Torres said that, since Jordan has refused to let the committee obtain a copy of his Statement of Financial Interests from the OPA, he is therefore asking the OPA to lead the probe. Of particular interest to Torres is the validity of the information contained in Jordan's SFI, his role in the construction of the Rota Public Library, and his prior contracts with the CNMI government on different Capital Improvement Projects.

Teregeyo visits DC office

Ana Teregeyo, Pete A. Tenorio's District Office Administrator, is currently undergoing orientation in the D.C. office of the Resident Representative. Teregeyo explained that Tenorio's District Office has been encountering several problems that she could not assist them with, as she did not understand the setup or organization of the office, hence the need for her to be personally briefed on the system being used. ÒWe are also working out the kinks in the office's financial management and property control system,Ó said Teregeyo. Tenorio himself said that operating two offices thousands of miles apart requires coordination and organization.

July 15, 2003

Finance pays CUC $800K

Shortly before the close of business yesterday, no less than Bob Schwalbach, the Governor's senior policy advisor, walked into the office of Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director Lorraine Babauta to personally hand over an $800,000 check as initial payment on the government's outstanding utility bill, sparing some government offices from sure disconnection. According to CUC spokesperson Pam Mathis, Schwalbach arrived at about 4:14pm Monday to present the check, which was dated June 11, 2003. Yesterday was the deadline set by the CUC for the government to come up with an initial payment on some $2.9 million representing the outstanding account of 12 government agencies.

Senate attempts to get back on track

With the return of Sen. Thomas P. Villagomez, minority senators asked Senate President Paul A. Manglona yesterday to call for a session tomorrow, July 16, to resume deliberations on urgent matters pending before the upper house. In a letter to Manglona, minority leader Pete P. Reyes, Sen. David M. Cing and Sen. Ramon S. Guerrero asked for a Wednesday session in order to address important and urgent issues before the Senate, now that all senators are in the CNMI. Manglona, who is presently acting governor, said the sooner Senate members can convene, the better. Villagomez, who arrived from California Friday, is also seeking a meeting among the members in a bid to address pending concerns.

Bureau closes Fina Sisu store

The Bureau of Environmental Health closed down the College Store in Fina Sisu last month during routine sanitary inspections on retail, eating and drinking establishments on Saipan.

In a statement issued yesterday, the bureau said it shut down the College Store on June 11, 2009, due to serious violations of health and sanitation standards. The notice did not indicate if the store has been allowed to re-open.

Other establishments inspected in June 2009 and their grades are as follow:

GRADE "A"

1. Subway Restaurant, Gualo Rai
2. Coca Cola Wholesale, Chalan Lau Lau
3. Ice Kiss Wholesale, Chalan Lau Lau
4. Shangai Pianli Store, Garapan
5. Galaxy Snack Bar, As Terlaje
6. Shell Service Station Retail, Gualo Rai
7. Shell Service Station Retail, Susupe
8. Shell Service Station Retail, San Roque
9. Coco Restaurant, Garapan
10. Café At The Park, Garapan
11. Royal Sourcing Fast Food, Chalan Kanoa
12. Marg's Kithen Retail & Bakery, Susupe
13. Yu Young Wholesale, China Town
14. King Fisher Golf Links, Bar & Refreshments, Talofofo
15. Sunny's Café, San Antonio
16. Club Chicago II, Garapan
17. Round Sports Bar & Restaurant, Chalan Kanoa
18. Taste Of India, Chalan Lau Lau
19. Orchid's Bar, Garapan
20. Hong Wan Restaurant, Garapan
21. King's Club, Garapan
22. Gaia Bar, Garapan
23. Club De Macau II, Garapan
24. Rose Karaoke, Garapan
25. Vegetables Plus Market, Puerto Rico
26. Korea House Restaurant, Susupe
27. Payless Super Market, Chalan Kanoa
28. Zhong Guang Retail, Susupe
29. Gourment Restaurant, Garapan
30. Tiendasita Plaza, Chalan Piao
31. Mei San Mini Mart, Koblerville
32. Café Manila, Garapan
33. Angel Snack Bar, San Jose
34. S.P.E. Wholesale, Chalan Lau Lau
35. New World Market, Chalan Piao
36. Diving Fish Mart, Chalan Piao
37. Saipan Cool Water & Ice, Kanat Tabla
38. Kim's Market, Navy Hill
39. Kentucky Fried Chicken &Taco Bell, Chalan Kanoa
40. Sam Ho Restaurant, San Antonia
41. Saipan Sea Ventures Bar, Puerto Rico
42. The Water Co., Lower Base
43. Midnight Karaoke, San Jose
44. Sky Café, Airport Road
45. J's Restaurant II, Gualo Rai
46. Capital Bowling Center, Garapan
47. Al's Store, Garapan
48. Horizon Retail & Wholesale, Tanapag
49. Mangkok Catering, San Antonio
50. Gold Ribbon Restaurant & Bakery Shop, Chalan Piao
51. Smile Store, San Antonio

GRADE "B"

1. Shinbashi Bar, Garapan
2. New Chang Ming Store, Garapan
3. Rainbow Karaoke Club, Garapan
4. Dela Cruz Pastry, Susupe
5. Hi Mart, Dan Dan
6. Hong's Market, Chalan Kanoa
7. Lao Market, Chalan Kanoa
8. Lucky Bar I, Garapan
9. Club Mr. Wonderful, As Lito
10. Elephant Mini Mart, Chalan Kanoa
11. Pacific Ocean Int'l. Retail, Chalan Kanoa
12. Abby's Fisherman's Restaurant & Bar, Garapan
13. Round Sports Reataurant & Bar, Chalan Kanoa

GRADE "C"

"NONE"

There may have been changes to these grades since this information was released. For updated information, call the bureau at 664-4870 or fax 664-4871. ***(PR-BEH)***

3 allegedly steal exploded ordnance at AMPRO

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
n_rodriguez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Police on Sunday arrested three men who are suspected of stealing scrap metals from the Marpi hazardous explosive removal project being operated by AMPRO Inc.

The suspects are now detained, according to Department of Public Safety acting information officer Jason Tarkong.

Tarkong said that around 10:47am on July 12, an informant alerted the DPS Central station about a theft inside the facility.

Police responded immediately and met with the unnamed complainant, who told them that several scraps of metal have been stolen from the ordnance disposal pit.

The complainant told police that he earlier saw a white pickup truck that was parked outside the fence of the project site and gave police its license plate number.

Police officers Jesse Seman and Edwin Aguon later spotted the vehicle in San Roque village based on the description provided by the complainant.

The police officers immediately pulled over the suspects' vehicle and upon questioning they learned that the three men on board had just come from a recycling center in Lower Base.

Tarkong said the three suspects, Antonio Aldan Ayuyu, 37; Mathew Angui Igisair, 34; and James Sanchez, 38, admitted to the police officers that they took the scrap metals of the exploded ordnance from the project site in Marpi.

The suspects also told police that they have just sold the stolen scrap metals to the recycling plant in Lower Base.

Police arrested the three suspects and brought them to the Department of Corrections, where they were booked for detention and the vehicle they used in the alleged stealing of the scrap metals was impounded.



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Outbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETD Jakarta	ETD Bangkok	ETD P. Kelang	ETD Melbourne	ETD Singapore	ETD Hochiminh	ETD Busan	ETD Kobe	ETD Shanghai	ETD Auckland	ETD Manila	ETD Hongkong	ETD Kaoshiung	ETD Naha
MELL SENOKO	024E	7/4 Sat	7/2 Thu	7/2 Thu	6/30 Tue	6/27 Sat	7/10 Fri	7/6 Mon	7/5 Sun	6/28 Sun	6/28 Sun	7/6 Mon	7/10 Fri	7/12 Sun	7/14 Tue
MELL SENTOSA	023E	7/11 Sat	7/9 Thu	7/9 Thu	7/7 Tue	7/4 Sat	7/17 Fri	7/13 Mon	7/12 Sun	7/5 Sun	7/5 Sun	7/13 Mon	7/17 Fri	7/19 Sun	7/21 Tue
MELL SEMBAWANG	016E	7/18 Sat	7/16 Thu	7/16 Thu	7/14 Tue	7/11 Sat	7/24 Fri	7/20 Mon	7/19 Sun	7/12 Sun	7/12 Sun	7/20 Mon	7/24 Fri	7/26 Sun	7/28 Tue
MELL SENOKO	025E	7/25 Sat	7/23 Thu	7/23 Thu	7/21 Tue	7/18 Sat	7/31 Fri	7/27 Mon	7/26 Sun	7/19 Sun	7/19 Sun	7/27 Mon	7/31 Fri	8/2 Sun	8/4 Tue
MELL SENTOSA	024E	8/1 Sat	7/30 Thu	7/30 Thu	7/28 Tue	7/25 Sat	8/7 Fri	8/3 Mon	8/2 Sun	7/26 Sun	7/26 Sun	8/3 Mon	8/7 Fri	8/9 Sun	8/11 Tue
MELL SEMBAWANG	017E	8/8 Sat	8/6 Thu	8/6 Thu	8/4 Tue	8/1 Sat	8/14 Fri	8/10 Mon	8/9 Sun	8/2 Sun	8/2 Sun	8/10 Mon	8/14 Fri	8/16 Sun	8/18 Tue

Inbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETA Guam	ETD Guam	ETA Saipan	ETA Yap	ETA Koror	ETA GenSan	ETA Davao	ETA Cebu	ETA Hongkong	ETA Kaoshiung	ETA Busan	ETA Yokohama	ETA Manila	ETA Singapore
MELL SENOKO	024E	7/18 Sat	7/19 Sun	7/19 Sun	SKIP	7/23 Thu	7/24 Fri	7/26 Sun	7/28 Tue	7/31 Fri	8/1 Sat	8/6 Thu	8/25 Tue	8/9 Sun	8/5 Wed
MELL SENTOSA	023E	7/25 Sat	7/26 Sun	7/26 Sun	7/28 Tue	7/30 Thu	7/31 Fri	8/2 Sun	8/4 Tue	8/7 Fri	8/8 Sat	8/13 Thu	9/1 Tue	8/16 Sun	8/12 Wed
MELL SEMBAWANG	016E	8/1 Sat	8/2 Sun	8/2 Sun	SKIP	8/6 Thu	8/7 Fri	8/9 Sun	8/11 Tue	8/14 Fri	8/15 Sat	8/20 Thu	9/8 Tue	8/23 Sun	8/19 Wed
MELL SENOKO	025E	8/8 Sat	8/9 Sun	8/9 Sun	8/11 Tue	8/13 Thu	8/14 Fri	8/16 Sun	8/18 Tue	8/21 Fri	8/22 Sat	8/27 Thu	9/15 Tue	8/30 Sun	8/26 Wed
MELL SENTOSA	024E	8/15 Sat	8/16 Sun	8/16 Sun	SKIP	8/20 Thu	8/21 Fri	8/23 Sun	8/25 Tue	8/28 Fri	8/29 Sat	9/3 Thu	9/22 Tue	9/6 Sun	9/2 Wed
MELL SEMBAWANG	017E	8/22 Sat	8/23 Sun	8/23 Sun	8/25 Tue	8/27 Thu	8/28 Fri	8/30 Sun	9/1 Tue	9/4 Fri	9/5 Sat	9/10 Thu	9/29 Tue	9/13 Sun	9/9 Wed

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XIX, Issue No. 169

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EDITORIAL

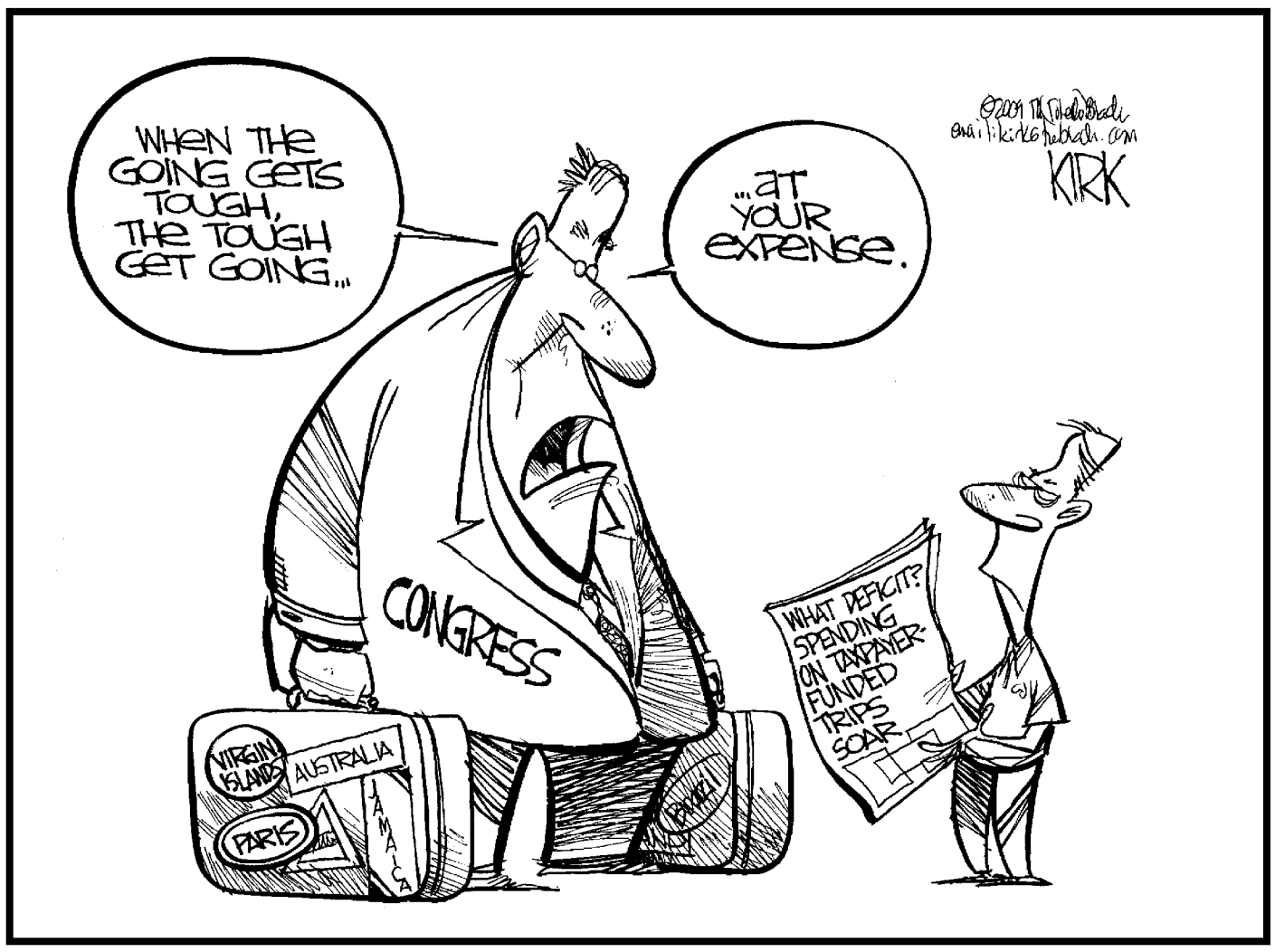
Growing aid

Food prices have moderated considerably since a year ago, when a sudden spike in the cost of staples triggered riots from Haiti to Egypt. Yet food security in many poor countries remains precarious; the global economic crisis has pushed 100 million more people into extreme poverty, raising the number worldwide to 1 billion, according to the United Nations. President Obama was right to emphasize the issue at the recently concluded Group of 8 summit in L'Aquila, Italy. U.S. leadership produced a $20 billion, three-year food security commitment from the assembled leaders.

There have been pledges of aid before, not all of them kept. It's not clear how much of the $20 billion promised Friday is new money and how much a repackaging of previous commitments. For its part, the Obama administration said that the United States would contribute $3.5 billion, of which half would represent new funds. Still, the program is potentially significant in that it would emphasize investment in poor countries' own agricultural production, rather than simply more gifts of grain from the developed world. The Green Revolution of the 1960s and '70s was a boon to the world's ability to feed itself. But years of abundant, cheap food induced complacency about rural development; governments and international aid agencies devoted their resources to other goals. Last year's price spike showed that that imbalance must be corrected, and the Obama administration has not forgotten the lesson.

Even if Congress fully funds the new program and every dollar is spent as intended, more must be done to help poor countries escape the cycle of hunger and aid dependency. The United States must foster markets by allowing relief agencies to spend U.S. aid money on food grown in poor regions abroad, not just in America. President George W. Bush recommended such a reform, only to be shot down by the farm lobby and its allies on Capitol Hill. And the developed world must open its markets to products from the developing world. The moribund Doha round of free-trade talks must be revived, as the G-8 leaders also promised this week. After all, the Doha round was inaugurated eight years ago as the "development round" precisely because its goal was to eliminate poverty through trade, not aid. That objective remains unfulfilled and no less urgent.

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Switchboard

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

Announcing: PassionProfit Workshop Coming Soon! RSVP requested. Will you attend a PassionProfit and/or Writer's workshop held at a soon-to-be-determined location (perhaps a school or Multi-Purpose Center) if held on a Saturday morning 9-12 or Sunday afternoon 2-5 in August?

Please e-mail walt@passionprofit.com with the words "will attend." Please indicate your preferred day and time in the e-mail. If enough people respond, it will happen!

■ ■ ■

The Enemy Within

I marshal all my forces
and I launch my best attack
With plans to smash and conquer
loot and pillage, sweep and sack

And just when all is ready
for that one deciding blow
The tables turn, and now
I have become my own worst foe

And now my new dilemma
seems ironic, almost fated:
I find myself reacting to
the battle I've created

With plans revised I strike again
intent this time to win
This close to calling "checkmate"
and the board gets switched again!

To win at such a conflict
where the enemy's not clear,
My strategy must change:
I must become the one I fear

Yes, think like my arch nemesis
whose thoughts will hold the key

THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT

Creating economic success for the CNMI



By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com.

But, wait. Oh, no! I see it now.....
.....the enemy is me!

I'll never win this battle
out to crush, kill and destroy
I'll win when all "his" troops
are also mine too to deploy

Offensive and defensive
must be one mind and the same
When both serve the same outcome
that's the way I'll win the game!

Armand Dimele, host of "The Positive Mind"—a favorite radio program on Pacifica Radio—describes an interesting technique he uses to teach people how to play chess. According to Armand, the game starts as usual, with each player making his/her moves based on their own strategy. However, 10 minutes into the game, he would do something quite innovative and turn the board around, forcing each player to resume the game by playing from the "other side," i.e. with his or her opponent's pieces and strategy.

This switch creates an interesting dynamic. If you're the *weaker* player, it allows you the advantage of proceeding now from a position of strength with a "better" board. If you're the *stronger* player, you now find yourself in a weaker position, defending against a superior attack, the very attack you launched at the beginning of the game! In either case, you are now experiencing the game from your opponent's viewpoint.

What a great metaphor for the game of life! Metaphysically, you can be sure that whatever plans of attack and demise you lay out for another will eventually return to you, for the simple reason that there's no one else out there but you. This basic law of returns has been referred to and described in many ways: "What goes around comes around," "As you sow, so shall you reap," the law of cause and effect, "the law of attraction," etc.

It is also poignant reminder that you can never really progress

See SWITCHBOARD on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Things we need

By STEPHEN B. SMITH
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Stephen B. Smith is the Accreditation, Language Arts, and National Forensic League coordinator for the Public School System Central Office.



Talking with some friends here recently, it occurred to me that the CNMI, that is, the people of the CNMI, need some things. And, no, I'm not talking about money. That one's a constant: we always need cash. No, let's look at some other things that, while not quite as urgent as money, are likely just as needful to us all.

We need help for the economy. To effect this we need to encourage more tourism. One way to do that would be to let them come! I mean to make it easy for the tourists to come. A priority of any of our legislators should be to proselytize the federal government to ease restrictions on China and Russia and perhaps others. This has been in the news recently, but has been kinda weakly treated in the main. Of course lawsuits against the federal government probably aren't helping.

Another area of need is long range transport. We need to allow more airlines to come in here. Cebu Pacific, Philippine Airlines, Korean Air and maybe a few others should be allowed to come in and compete with direct flights to American soil. Travel costs are just too crazy right now. Whatever happened to the idea that the customer came first?

A third area of need is simpler. We need to asphalt our roads and paved driveways. I was coming out of a parking lot the other day, after one of the recent heavy rains, and my wheels were spinning big time just trying to get up the slight incline of the parking lot exit! I know I'm not the only one who has experienced this—oh, and my tires are new. Similarly, I skidded out into some bushes on Isa Drive some few months back, because of the very slippery rain-slicked surface. And no, I was not speeding. Our roads can sometimes be very challenging. Yes, the steepest hills have been asphalted, but that is simply not enough.

For those of you out there in readerland who do not mind standing in line, the following probably doesn't matter much but I do mind standing in line, hence the following: Why is that we can pay IT&E online, our bank loans online, and practically everything else, but not CUC; this one needs fixing. Similarly, how about online voter registration, car registration, and tax form submission. These things would save an enormous amount of time and money—which our local government assures us it has so little of—and lighten the load, at least time-wise, of all of our citizens.

Also, we should be able to get our cars inspected and just send in the receipt number and pay the registration bill by mail; that would take care of BMV. Other agencies in question, i.e., CUC, Tax & Rev, and the like would then not have to fool with long lines of desperate and frustrated citizens. And yes, they are uniformly desperate and frustrated more often than not.

Finally, there is a cryin' need to do something about state of our beaches. The amount of trash and other litter that can be seen after any particular weekend or holiday is totally unseemly. The barbarians that leave such unwelcome presents for the rest of us to take care of need to be allowed to contribute to the state coffers. There has been no concerted effort that I have seen, in the 20 years I've been here on island, to do anything substantive about this problem. No time like the present.

Absolutely finally, today, Sunday, July12th, is a special holiday—well it was in ancient Rome. It is Julius Caesar's birthday. Interesting, huh?

Why I want to visit the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument

By DENNIS CHAN
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Editor's Note: The Friends of the Monument held an essay contest that ended Monday to find a local young person to go on a boat expedition to Maug and the Northern Islands. This is the winning essay, written by Dennis Chan of San Vicente. The expedition leaves on Monday.

I am 18 and have just graduated from high school. I am no fisherman, not an excellent swimmer, cannot dive into meters-deep water and wrestle whales. I'm from Saipan and, if chosen, would well-represent my age group. I want so badly to get on that boat to Maug to experience the greater Marianas.

People my age, my fellow graduates, and many of my friends still in high school easily diss the Commonwealth, their Saipan that they reside in. Whether it is the government, school or the smallness they feel holds them. Our memories are still fresh of the summer of 2008 in the rolling blackouts, in the sweat. I'm sure we love Saipan. I love Saipan, we swim at beaches, climb down, climb up the stairs of the Grotto, and stroll the Street Market. However there's a perception that we know all there is to know, we've sucked all the sap there is on Saipan. It's been said that Saipan is a bore. Our eyes look to taller buildings, the malls of the mainland. We sigh, jaded and discontented after signing in, signing off, signing in, signing off, MySpace, Facebook, waiting for that viral video to load—we sigh, worn with the immediacy of the Internet. "Saipan sucks." My home sucks. This Commonwealth sucks. Nothing's happening. I've heard these things many times. My perception and theirs are limited to what we know. I feel strongly that there is something beautiful, not as immediate as a video on YouTube, but ever present. More reliable than whatever government is in place, more reliable than your water or electricity, more secure than an accredited college status—Saipan is not the Marianas, the Marianas rolls in blue expanse over miles and miles and settles some in the green and the trees and the beaches. I want to go to Maug and see this happen.

Perception is always jolted with new experience. I spent a week on Tinian without Internet or decent showers, kept awake in damp and smelly tents. We camped at Tachungnya. Our head instructor, Ms. Valencourt, remarked at the campfire how she gathered from what she heard that we kids thought Tinian to be a foreign country. Tinian is right next door! Tinian is our sister and brother. Tinian holds so much history—I stood over the uncovered pits of Little Boy and Fat Man and was overwhelmed, viewed pictures of cities obliterated and was grave.

I may not speak for all my age, but our perception of fun forms in that media mold: what TV offers, what they say. But there is grandness here; there was on Tinian. On Tinian where Tachungnya houses fish a few feet from shore—the butterfly fish and its second rear eye swims by, on Tinian where the limestone trail teeters to an edge to a view filled with blue, green and beach, on Tinian were destruction sat in pits that should have never been dug. Tinian has no theater, no stop lights, we joke, and yet Tinian was unique. All of us Saipan campers agreed on this.

That was all a tease though. Tinian's become a tickle, and I think there might be more. I want to see the rest of my Marianas because I tasted Tinian.

Tinian is a ferry ride away and I felt it was another world. I'm naive for it, and maybe naive in thinking partly that a trip to Maug would render me to some enlightening epiphany. I want to go because I know I'd appreciate it. I want to go because I am young and feel the universe expanding, running and that I better catch up, or keep a good pace before it escapes me.

To the north on a boat to Maug maybe I'd get to know my home more—the greater Marianas. Maybe I'd taste some great fish, share words that bewildered me and maybe other youth will read and decide to see for themselves. I want to go because I believe that the monument reveals and protects a Marianas with a different, better thrill than we, my age, have imagined finding elsewhere. But I want to know firsthand.

Letter to the Editor

An open letter to Mr. Timothy Bellas, WGTF

Mr. Bellas, as former garment workers, we are confused by the statement you gave to *Saipan Tribune* on June 25, 2009.

First, you said your office gave $5,000 to a Filipino garment worker who has a serious medical condition when the Philippine Consulate General approached your office. What about the Chinese garment workers? Two weeks ago, one of our former co-worker at Michigan Garment Factory sent your office an application, asking your office for assistance. Since she needs an immediate response, she provided a contact phone number, but hasn't received any word from your office. Do we need our country government office to approach your office like the Philippine Consulate General? Unfortunately, we don't have that here. The only office here to represent China—CEDA—is a shame and useless. If no one lobbies for us, are you just going to forget us?

Second, you told the same reporter that "the money will only be disbursed to those with emergency needs and not to make life comfortable or luxurious." Do you think we are having a comfortable and luxurious life here? Since the garment industry left, most of the garment workers have gone back to their home country. For different reasons, we are still here, some of us are lucky to find new work; some of us are not due to the economic downturn.

There are garment workers here who have lost work for more than six months without getting any social assistance; there are garment workers here who get sick but don't have money to go to the hospital; there are garment workers here who won unpaid back wages claims but have nowhere to collect the award; there are garment workers here who have U.S. citizen children and are having a hard time feeding their child; there are garment workers here who wish to go home but couldn't get a plane ticket, because their employer and insurance company abandoned them. Are those the "comfortable and luxurious" life you were talking about?

Third, you told the reporter that the remaining money from the $600,000 will then be donated to a charity. Donations to charities are essential to every society. But before you donate the money to your friend's charity, think about priority first. This $600,000 is the leftover of the $20 million settlement money that was supposed to be used to compensate the garment workers for their unpaid overtime and the abuses they encountered at work. You know in detail how much of the million went to non-garment worker parties. The $20 million is gone; there is only $600,000 that remains. With the hardship the garment workers are facing now, why is the priority so simple as giving it to charity? If you are tired of handling the money correctly, we can ask Judge Munson to appoint another trustee.

Ma Hui
Chen Quixiang
Feng Xiaoqig
Liu Weiyong
Zhao Yunje

SWITCHBOARD

From Page 10

and succeed in life by pulling another down. You can never feel good about yourself by disparaging another. The only way to elevate yourself both in esteem and status is to elevate others. The only way to feel good about yourself is to make another feel good about him or herself. It could not be otherwise. Just think what a dismal place this would be if the only way to succeed was to make another fail.

The "chessboard of life" is constantly being switched so that we may learn this valuable lesson. Hopefully, after the board is switched enough times for you to notice, you'll revise your strategy and realize that since someday you may be playing with your opponent's pieces, the strategy that will work best from the beginning of the game is one where both of you have the opportunity to win. For the victory you create in life may be your own!

■ ■ ■

Note: Fans and followers of the book, *Chicken Feathers and Garlic Skin: Diary of a Chinese Garment Factory Girl on Saipan* may now find copies at Bookseller Bookstore in the Joeten Plaza in Susupe or on Amazon.com. Hurry, there's a limited supply!

***Note**: Ever wanted to direct your friends and family to a set of websites that said good things about Saipan? Do what I do: send them to www.bestofsaipan.com!*

***Note**: For more tips on overcoming your fears, acting on your ideas, changing the game, and creating a passion-centered lifestyle, visit www.passionprofit.com!*

■ ■ ■

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 15 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit. *Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt's philosophy and formula visit www.saipanpreneur.com and www.passionprofit.com.*

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼77°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲86	▼77
Palau	Showers	▲85	▼78
Yap	Showers	▲86	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲88	▼77
Pohnpei	Showers	▲88	▼74
Kosrae	Mostly Sunny	▲89	▼79
Majuro	Rain	▲85	▼79

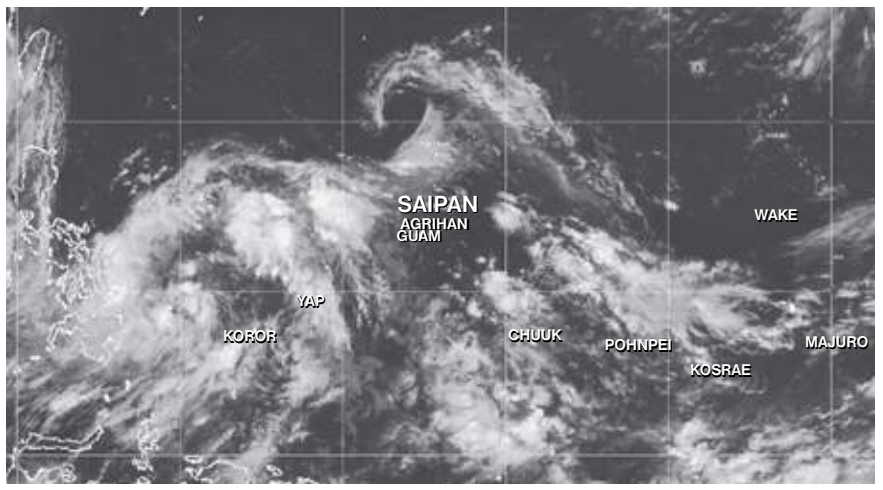
Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲59	▼53
Beijing	Partly Sunny	▲100	▼75
Hong Kong	Showers	▲91	▼82
Honolulu	Showers	▲84	▼76
London	Showers	▲75	▼57
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼64
Manila	Rain	▲83	▼77
Melbourne	Showers	▲57	▼43
Miami	Thundershowers	▲91	▼80
New York	Cloudy	▲81	▼68
Osaka	Showers	▲86	▼74
Paris	Mostly Sunny	▲78	▼59
Pusan	Thundershowers	▲91	▼72
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲90	▼68
Salem	Mostly Sunny	▲87	▼53
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲76	▼56
Seoul	Showers	▲90	▼70
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲90	▼75
Washington, DC	Cloudy	▲90	▼72

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
12:25 AM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
7:25 AM Today	Low Tide:	0.5 Feet
1:09 PM Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet
6:39 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.8 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

An upper-level low is centered north of the CNMI near 21N144E and is helping to create mostly high cloudiness conditions for most of the Marianas but with only isolated shower activity well to the north. A band of scattered showers was occurring in association with the upper-low between 21N and 23N from 143E to 152E. A monsoon trough extends southeastward from a developing low pressure area west of Koror near 8N133E through the area between Palau and Yap and ending south of Chuuk near EQ155E. Numerous showers and isolated thunderstorms were occurring in the vicinity of the low between 4N and 10N and west of 134E. Elsewhere scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms were occurring south of the above area down to the equator. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms were also occurring in several patches to the east of Koror and through Yap from 3N to 15N between 136E and 141E further to the east. Surface convergence along the monsoon trough were helping to aid the development of scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms from the equator to 6N between 146E and 153E. This is south of Chuuk. Two areas of scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms were occurring due to convergence in the low-level trade-wind flow. The first was north of Pohnpei from 7N to 12N between 154E and 165E and the second was within 100 miles of line from 10N171E to 12N180. This was primarily to the northeast of both Kwajalein and Majuro.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	5:55 AM	6:51 PM
Thursday	5:55 AM	6:51 PM
Friday	5:55 AM	6:51 PM
Saturday	5:55 AM	6:51 PM
Sunday	5:56 AM	6:51 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:53 PM	11:59 AM
Thursday		12:53 PM
Friday	12:37 AM	1:51 PM
Saturday	1:27 AM	2:53 PM
Sunday	2:24 AM	3:58 PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 13, 2009

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:50am	12:25pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:20am	5:10am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:50am	1:20pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:30pm	1:20pm	4, 5
C09603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
C09605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
C09599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW99	6:05am	8:40am	Daily
NW78	9:00am	2:05pm	Daily via NGO
NW75	3:50pm	6:25pm	Daily

SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)

OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	1, 4, 6

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW78	9:00am	11:40am	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	1, 4, 6 via KIX
OZ606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA

OZ604/701	2:20am	11:25am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:50am	11:25am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C09317/893	4:30am	8:50am	7 via GUM
C09603/933	3:30pm	8:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:30pm	7:45am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:20am	11:45am	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:50am	11:45am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:15am	3:50am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:10am	2:40am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09598	2:10am	3:50am	5, 6 via ROP
C09316	2:20am	3:10am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:20am	11:10am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	2:00pm	2:50pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW76	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
NW77	6:35pm	1:40am+1	Daily via NGO
NW100	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily

OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN

OZ120	9:55pm	2:20am+1	3, 5, 7

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW77	9:10pm	1:40am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:30pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	3, 5, 7 via KIX
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA-SAIPAN

C0894/9604	10:00am	5:50pm	6 via GUM
OZ702/603	12:45pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	12:45pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/C09596	10:00pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C0934/9596	10:55pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ704/605	11:50pm	2:30pm+1	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:30pm	2, 4, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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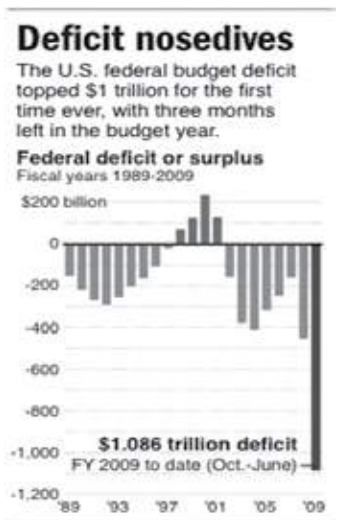
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Business

Budget deficit tops $1 trillion for first time

WASHINGTON (AP)—The federal deficit has topped $1 trillion for the first time ever and could grow to nearly $2 trillion by this fall, intensifying fears about higher interest rates, inflation and the strength of the dollar. The deficit has been widened by the huge sum the government has spent to ease the recession, combined with a sharp decline in tax revenues. The cost of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan also is a major factor.

The soaring deficit is making Chinese and other foreign buyers of U.S. debt nervous, which could make them reluctant lenders down the road. It could also force the Treasury Department to pay higher interest rates to make U.S. debt attractive longer-term. "These are mind-boggling numbers," said Sung Won Sohn, an economist at the Smith School of Business at California State University. "Our foreign investors from China and elsewhere are starting to have concerns about not only the value of the dollar but how safe their investments will be in the The Treasury Department said Monday that the deficit in June totaled $94.3 billion, pushing the total since the budget year started in October to $1.09 trillion. The administration forecasts that the deficit for the entire year will hit $1.84 trillion in October Government spending is on the rise to address the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression and an unemployment rate that has climbed to 9.5 percent.



Congress already approved a $700 billion financial bailout for banks, automakers and other sectors, and a $787 billion economic stimulus package to try to jump-start a recovery. Outlays through the first nine months of this budget year total $2.67 trillion, up 20.5 percent from the same period a year ago.

There is growing talk among some Obama administration officials that a second round of stimulus may eventually be necessary.

That has many Republicans and deficit hawks worried that the U.S. could be setting itself up for more financial pain down the road if interest rates and inflation surge. They also are raising alarms about additional spending the administration is proposing, including its plan to reform health care.

President Barack Obama and Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner have said the U.S. is committed to bringing down the deficits once the economy and financial sector recover. The Obama administration has set a goal of cutting the deficit in half by the end of his first term in office.

Judge OKs shift of some Delphi assets to new GM

NEW YORK (AP)—A bankruptcy judge on Monday approved a deal that could shift some of auto parts supplier Delphi's assets to General Motors Co., which emerged from Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection last week.

U.S. Judge Robert Gerber, who is overseeing the liquidation of Motors Liquidation Co., the collection of assets and liabilities left over after the sale of prized GM assets to a new company, gave his approval to the deal, allowing GM and an affiliate of Platinum Equity to buy the bulk of Delphi's assets and help the auto supplier emerge from bankruptcy protection.

All of the assets and costs related to the agreement will transfer to the new GM and not affect the finances of "Old GM" or the possible returns for the old company's creditors, GM attorney Robert Lemons told the court.

The agreement could help save Delphi Corp. from liquidation, but still hinges on the consummation of a deal between the Troy, Mich.-based auto supplier, the new General Motors and Platinum.

As part of deal reached in June, Beverly Hills, Calif.-based Platinum will be allowed to operate Delphi's businesses both in the U.S. and abroad. Detroit-based GM will contribute a total of about $3.9 billion, including a $2 billion equity investment in Platinum, to help finance the deal. Platinum will contribute a maximum of $500 million in financing.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Prominent NY lawyer gets 20 years in $400M fraud

NEW YORK (AP)—A once-prominent Manhattan attorney was sentenced Monday to 20 years in prison for hatching a massive fraud in a brazen attempt to keep his law firm afloat and bankroll a lavish lifestyle. Prosecutors had sought 145 years behind bars for Marc Dreier. But the judge concluded he was "no Mr. Madoff"—a reference to disgraced financier Bernard Madoff, who last month received a 150-year term. Dreier, 59, had pleaded guilty to a seven-year, $400 million scheme that, though eclipsed by Madoff's multibillion dollar swindle, was so outlandish prosecutors labeled him "the Houdini of impersonation and false documents."

Oil rises above $60 on signs Asia growth reviving

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices climbed back above $60 a barrel Tuesday in Asia on signs the region be may emerging from an economic slump. Benchmark crude for August delivery was up 62 cents to $60.31 a barrel by midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. On Monday, the contract fell 20 cents to settle at $59.69

Singapore said Tuesday its economy surged an annualized, seasonally adjusted 20.4 percent in the second quarter, adding to hopes that Asia could lead the world out of recession and fuel crude demand.

Rattner leaving auto task force

WASHINGTON (AP)—Steven Rattner, who led the Obama administration's efforts to restructure General Motors and Chrysler through swift, government-led bankruptcies, plans to depart his post, officials said Monday. Rattner will be replaced by former steelworkers official Ron Bloom, who has been a key member of the task force and adviser to Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner. The administration said Monday that Rattner had decided to return to private life and his family in New York City. A leaner General Motors Co. emerged from bankruptcy last week and Chrysler Group LLC shed itself of Chapter 11 protection last month during short stints through the bankruptcy courts once thought impossible. Rattner headed the government's work to reshape the two companies, which were severely threatened by overwhelming debt, poor management decisions and sluggish sales.

Saipan Fishermen's Association

25th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament

Saipan, CNMI
July 18 & 19, 2009
(Saturday & Sunday)

25th ANNUAL SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL FISHING TOURNAMENT
MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE CNMI
Mobil
2009

LAUNCHING

Points/Times: Sugar Dock (Chalan Kanoa), Smiling Cove Marina, Fishing Base (Garapan) 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. All boats launching after 8:00 a.m. must launch their boats at the Smiling Cove Marina

Entrance Fee: $150.00 per boat includes a captain and one angler (2). $25.00 for each additional angler.

Type of Fishing: Trolling

Expected Number : 50 + boats

Categories : Bill Fish (1st to 3rd) Yellow Fin (1st to 3rd) Wahoo (1st to 3rd) Mahi-Mahi (1st to 3rd) Skipjack (1st to 3rd) & Total weight

Special Prize : The Saipan Fishermen's Association will award special prizes and will be announced on a later date to the 1st participant to land a marlin weighing over 624.34 lbs.

$10,000 will be given to first participant to land the record noted

Banquet at Hyatt Regency Saipan

SAIPAN FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Participants who plan on bringing a guest to the banquet must purchase tickets during pre-registration at the Smiling Cove Marina at $25.00 each.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, July 17, 2009
5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. : Pre-registration at the Smiling Cove Marina. Officials from the Saipan Fishermen's Association will briefly go over the rules & regulation of the Tournament there. Blessing of the boats will take place soon after the rules briefing.

Saturday, July 18, 2009
6:00 a.m. : The 25th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament officially begins. (Reminder: designated launching points and times only).
6:00 p.m. : Tournament ends for the day.

Sunday, July 19, 2009
6:00 a.m. : Tournament continues
6:00 p.m. : The 25th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament officially ends.

Monday, July 20, 2009
6:00 p.m. : Tournament Awards Banquet (TBA) Must present your tickets at the door in order to enter

Nation

Sotomayor vows impartiality if confirmed to court

WASHINGTON (AP)—Sonia Sotomayor, the first Hispanic Supreme Court nominee in history, vowed loyalty to "the impartiality of our justice system" Monday, confronting Republican skeptics at Senate hearings suffused with racial politics but all but certain to lead to her confirmation.

"My personal and professional experiences help me to listen and understand, with the law always commanding the result in every case," the 55-year old Sotomayor said in her first substantive remarks in public since President Barack Obama nominated her seven weeks ago.

Her comments amounted to a polite but firm rebuttal to Republicans who have criticized her 2001 comment that a "wise Latina woman with the richness of her experiences" might make better rulings than a white male.


Sotomayor

Despite GOP misgivings, Democrats command a large majority in the committee and the Senate as a whole, and there seemed virtually no doubt about the ultimate outcome.

"Unless you have a complete meltdown, you're going to get confirmed," Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., told her.

"And I don't think you will" have a meltdown, he added quickly as Sotomayor sat listening, her face in a half-smile.

She'll answer questions Tuesday following Monday's day of speechmaking by committee members and her own five-minute statement.

Unlike senators who will vote on her appointment, Sotomayor made no overt reference to her place in history as the daughter of Puerto Rican parents who moved to New York. Instead, she said her life has been "uniquely American," and she recalled a childhood in a south Bronx housing project.

"I want to make one special note of thanks to my mother," she said. "I am here today because of her aspirations and sacrifices for my brother Juan and me."

She turned as she spoke, whispering a thank-you to her mother, seated one row behind her in the packed hearing room.

Sotomayor spoke after listening for hours as Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee praised her as a pioneer well qualified for the high court and Republicans questioned her impartiality and accused Obama of adhering to a double standard in selecting her.

At times, senators of both parties seemed intent on trying to settle old scores at the hearings for the first high court nominee picked by a Democrat in 15 years.

Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I., observed acidly that the current court "has not kept the promises of modesty or humility made when President Bush nominated Justices Roberts and Alito."

AP sources: Obama wants Senate health bill quickly

WASHINGTON (AP)—Moving forcefully on his top domestic priority, President Barack Obama told a powerful Senate chairman on Monday he wants health care legislation ready in the Finance Committee by week's end, according to numerous Democratic officials.

These officials said Obama made his wishes known directly to Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., at a White House meeting attended by administration officials and senior Democratic lawmakers.

It was not immediately clear whether Obama expressed a preference for a bipartisan measure—which Baucus has been laboring over for months—or a bill tailored more to Democratic specifications.

Still, the virtual deadline underscored Obama's determination to push initial legislation through both houses of Congress before lawmakers leave the Capitol in August for a vacation.

"Don't bet against us. We are going to make this thing happen," the president told reporters earlier in the day, fresh from an overseas trip that coincided with slippage in momentum for his top domestic priority.

The officials who described the private meeting did so on condition of anonymity, saying they were not authorized to discuss private meetings.

Scott Mulhauser, a spokesman for Baucus, said the senior Democrat "has stressed the Finance Committee will be ready when it has a mark (proposal) that can ensure quality, affordable care for every American, lower costs—and pass the Senate."

Despite objections from conservative and moderate Democrats, prospects for House action along the president's timetable are better than in the Senate.

Cameras captured 'chilling' break-in at Fla. home

PENSACOLA, Fla. (AP)—Byrd and Melanie Billings had a growing brood of adopted children with autism, Down syndrome and other disabilities, and took care to make their nine-bedroom house a safe place for them, wiring it with surveillance cameras in every room.

It was those cameras that captured images of the masked men who shot the wealthy couple to death in a break-in executed with chilling precision.

Authorities made three arrests over the weekend, but the mystery around town only deepened Monday, when Sheriff David Morgan said that as many as eight people in all may have been involved and that the crime appeared to have "numerous motives," though robbery was the only one he would mention.

"Mr. Billings was well-to-do. He was an entrepreneur and he opened his home to the community. You are asking me to speculate on a motive. That could have been one reason," Morgan said, likening the killings to the 1959 slayings of a Kansas farm family that were chronicled by Truman Capote in the book "In Cold Blood."

The video from last Thursday showed three armed, masked men arriving in a red van, entering through the front of the house and then returning to the vehicle. Others dressed in what the sheriff called "ninja garb" went in through an unlocked utility door in the back. They were in and out in under 10 minutes.

ACROSS THE NATION

Thunderstorms cause 5th delay for space shuttle

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)—Thunderstorms once again forced NASA to call off the launch of space shuttle Endeavour on Monday, the fifth delay for the space station construction mission. NASA said it would try again Wednesday, after taking a one-day break. In a scene nearly identical to Sunday, launch managers halted the countdown just minutes before Endeavour and seven astronauts were supposed to blast off in the early evening. This time, storms packed with lightning popped up on opposite sides of the launching site, one after the other, close enough to violate NASA's safety rules.

Episcopal church to affirm gay clergy

NEW YORK (AP)—The Episcopal Church moved Monday toward affirming their acceptance of gays and lesbians for all roles in ministry, despite pressure from fellow Anglicans worldwide for a decisive moratorium on consecrating another openly gay bishop. Bishops at the Episcopal General Convention in Anaheim, Calif., voted 99-45 with two abstentions for a statement declaring "God has called and may call" to ministry gays in committed lifelong relationships. Lay and priest delegates to the meeting had comfortably approved a nearly identical statement, and were expected to adopt the latest version before the meeting ends Friday.

Gunman found guilty in Vegas Strip casino shooting

LAS VEGAS (AP)—A Nevada jury found an unemployed house painter guilty of 51 of 52 felony charges against him in a shooting inside a Las Vegas Strip casino two years ago. Steven Francis Zegrean showed no emotion as he sat between his lawyers and a Hungarian language translator while the verdicts were delivered late Monday in Clark County District Court in Las Vegas. A court clerk who spent more than 20 minutes reading the charges at the start of the trial took about nine minutes to read the verdicts at the end.

ROTA CASINO GAMING COMMISSION (RCGC)
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
P.O. Box 1547 ROTA, MP 96951

PURSUANT TO THE OPEN GOVERNMENT ACT, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION, DIEGO M. SONGAO HEREBY ANNOUNCES THAT THE ROTA CASINO GAMING COMMISSION'S REGULAR MEETING FOR 17, JULY 2009.

DATE: **Friday, 17 July 2009**

TIME: **2:30 PM**

LOCATION: **Antonio Camacho Atalig Memorial Annex Building, Rota Casino Gaming Commission's Office**

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Roll Call
III. Adoption of Agenda
IV. Adoption of Minutes
V. Chairman's Report
VI. Old Business
- None
VII. New Business
- Staffing Needs
VIII. Miscellaneous
IX. Adjournment

*At anytime during the meeting, the Commission may move to Executive Session.

/s/ Diego M. Songao **17, July 2009**
Chairman

MARIANAS PUBLIC LAND TRUST
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, The Open Government Act of 1992, the Marianas Public Land Trust has scheduled a Board of Trustees Regular Meeting to be held on Friday, July 17, 2009 beginning at 9:00 AM at the MPLT Conference Room, Suite #107, Morgen Building; Saipan, MP.

The following agenda is hereby established:

I PRELIMINARIES
- Call to Order
- Roll Call
- Adoption of Agenda
- Adoption of Minutes

II CONSULTANT'S REPORTS
- Legal Counsel Reports
- Investment Consultant Reports
  - Performance Reports – June 2009
  - Asset Allocation Study – Part 1
- Loan Administrator Reports
- Board Consultant Reports
  - ETI Response Letters

III OLD BUSINESS
- By-laws Review & Amendments

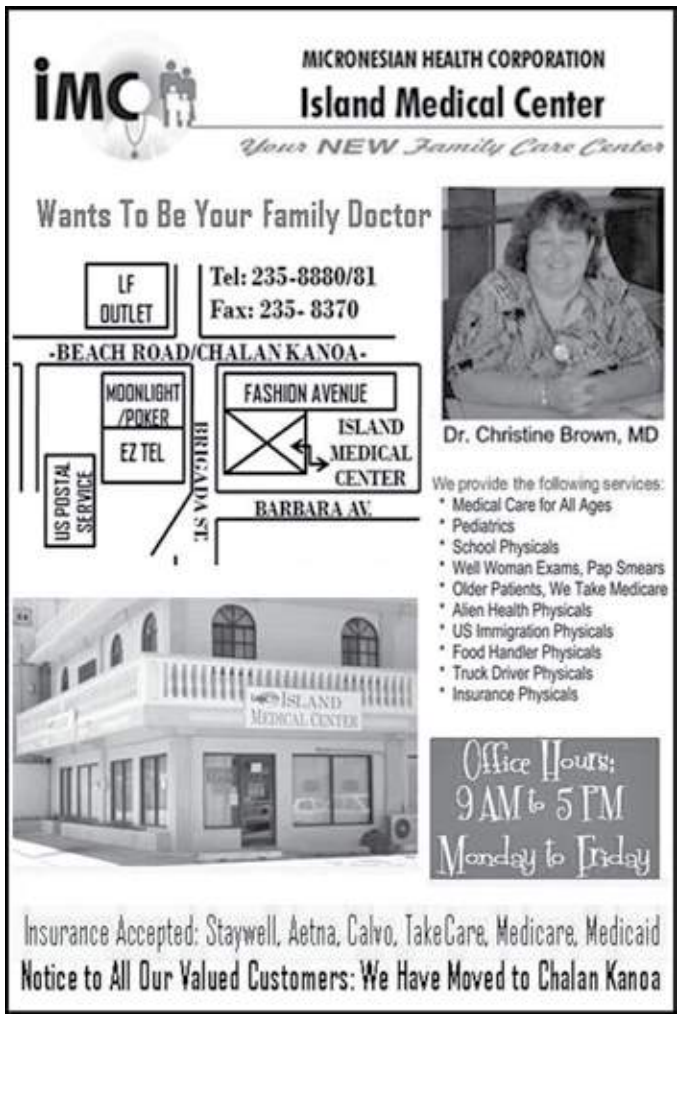
IV NEW BUSINESS
- Investment Basics Course/AIF

V EXECUTIVE SESSION
At anytime during this scheduled meeting, the Board of Trustees may be required to enter into Executive Session to discuss matters deemed privileged and confidential.

VI MISCELLANEOUS
VII ADJOURNMENT

In accordance with Public Law 8-41, additional agenda items may be added to the above listing only by the recorded vote of the majority of the trustee governing body. All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written and oral testimony on the above agenda items.

/s/ Vianney B. Hocog
Chairman, Board of Trustees



RESOLUTION

OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS RETIREMENT FUND FOR NON-RECOGNITION OF RETIREE ADOPTIONS FOR SURVIVOR BENEFITS PURPOSES

BR 09-002

WHEREAS, the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund ("Fund") was statutorily created as a pension plan to provide retirement security and other benefits to retired, qualified, prior and present Northern Mariana Island Government ("Government) employees and their eligible dependents; and

WHEREAS, the Retirement Fund Board of Trustees ("Board") are statutorily mandated to direct the management of an actuarially sound pension plan funded by the Government in accord with the constitutional provisions protecting members' rights; and

WHEREAS, the Northern Mariana Island Constitution ("Constitution") protects the accrued benefits of the Retirement Fund's pension system from being diminished and/or impaired; and

WHEREAS, the Fund's assets has plummeted from over $500 million in 2007 to approximately $300 million in 2009, a mere two years, due in tandem to the 2008 world wide investment market decline and investment drawdowns in order to pay pension payments; and

WHEREAS, the Fr.utd, against advice of its investment consultants, is forced to drawdown investment assets in order to pay biweekly pension to Fund members because the Government has yet to remit statutorily mandated contributions and obligations; and

WHEREAS, the Board has sought, to no avail, the assistance of the Executive and Legislative Branches in order to address the Retirement Fund's continuing fiscal emergency due to the non-payment of employer contributions, the 2008 world wide decline in investment markets, and the drastic Retirement Fund drawdowns to meet pension payment obligations; and

WHEREAS, the CNMI continues to be delinquent in employer contributions and various other obligations despite years of Board and Retirement Fund collection efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Retirement Fund was openly criticized on June 30, 2005 for using invested funds to pay for monthly pension checks and for failing to commence litigation in 2002 by the current head of the Executive Branch of the Government; and

WHEREAS, the Retirement Fund has already fallen below a level of forty-five percent (45o/o) actuarial funding at the conclusion of fiscal year 2008, and has not reached a level of total funded actuarial liability of sixty percent (60%) fiscal year 2000; and

WHEREAS, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 ("ERISA"), enacted by Public Law 93-406, 88 Stat. 829, is a federal law that established the minimum standards for pension plans in private industries; and

WHEREAS, ERISA, and subsequent amendments, provides that a pension plan may not make lump sum or other accelerated payments and provides for the cessation of benefit accruals under a plan that is less than 60% funded as well as the cessation of certain contingent benefit payments under the plan; and

WHEREAS, private pension programs subject to ERISA laws would have ceased lump sum or other accelerated payments and had benefits frozen if their funding level was currently at the Retirement Fund level: and

WHEREAS, the Board and the Retirement Fund, although not subject to ERISA, looks to case laws interpreting ERISA and case laws from other jurisdictions with similar constitutionally protected pension plans as persuasion in interpreting and implementing laws mandating the management of the Retirement Fund; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 15-98 amended 1 CMC §8356 and increased from ten to fifteen (15) years all eligible Class I Retirement Fund members electing to withdraw their contribution from the Fund: and

WHEREAS' the Fund was forced to liquidate and drawdown investment assets in order to comply with Public Law l5-98 and I CMC $ 8356; and

WHEREAS, the Fund has paid in compliance with Public Law l5-98 and I CMC $ 8356 the following amounts: Fiscal Year ("FY") 2000 almost $4 million; FY200l over $3 million; FY2002 over $4 million; FY2003 over $3.5 million; FY2004 over $3 million; FY2005 almost $3 million; FY2006 over $4.5 million; FY2007 over $5 million; FY2008 over $5.5 million; and as of December 31, 2008 almost $1.5 million; and

WHEREAS, the over one hundred twenty-one million, five hundred sixty-four thousand dollars ($121,564,000.00) in total investment drawdowns occurring since fiscal year 2005, to include the inception of the effective date of Public Law I 5-l 5 (retroactive to March 1, 2006), to meet pension obligations and refund payments have seriously impacted the Retirement Fund's ability to increase their investment portfolio; and

WHEREAS, the Board has been for years gravely concerned that the Retirement Fund assets have been and are being severely diminished and/or impaired by the acts and/or omissions of the Government and the Legislature; and

WHEREAS, the Board, in upholding their fiduciary duty, filed a lawsuit in 2006 after years of demanding payment for various employer contributions and other Government obligations that went unanswered; and

WHEREAS, numerous retired persons have adopted persons following retirement with the effect of rendering an enhanced retiree survivor benefit for persons who were not listed as beneficiaries upon the original submission of the Retiree's Retirement Fund Application, with the effect of this practice to increase the Retirement Fund unfunded liability; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 16-19 ("HB 16-19") was introduced in the House of Representatives on February 7, 2008 that has since been referred to committee with no action for well over a year.

WHEREAS, the Board must protect the Retirement Fund's assets for all Retirement Fund members by any means necessary due to the Executive and Legislative Branches non-response to numerous requests for assistance to address the Retirement Fund's current fiscal emergency, most especially to the passage of H.B l6-19.

WHEREAS, the June 29, 2009 Superior Court judgment in Civil Action No, 06-0367, the Fund was criticized by the court as follows: "The Fund is also partially responsible for the mess that it is in . It has been too generous in allowing the grandchildren and great grandchildren of the first generation of retirees to obtain benefits long after the original retiree has died. The Fund was designed to provide for retirees and their spouses. It is assumed that when a person retires that his or her children are already grown up. The Fund is not for the children of the retirees' children. This is unfair to future retirees who could possibly see the original retiree's family avail themselves of the Fund for over eighteen years."

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Retirement Fund Board of Trustees, in upholding their fiduciary duty, hereby directs the Retirement Fund management and staff to cease processing any amendments or additions to originally filed Applications for Retirement to list additional beneficiaries arising through adoption for purposes of computation of survivor benefits until such time as the Retirement Fund is no longer in a fiscal emergency.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this directive will take effect on the 1st day of September, 2009 after notice has been given to all members by publication in newspapers in general circulation in the Northern Mariana Islands on three (3) different occasions, the first notice to be publicized no later than July 15, 2009.

The undersigned duly appointed and authorized representatives of the NMI Retirement Fund, a Public, autonomous agency duly formed pursuant to the laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands hereby certify that the foregoing is an officially sanctioned resolution duly adopted at a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the NMI Retirement Fund, held in accordance with CNMI laws and procedures on the 7th day of July, 2009, and that said resolution is now in full force and effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, We have executed our names as members of the NMI Retirement Fund Board of Trustees and have hereunto affixed the corporate seal of the NMI Retirement Fund this 7th day of July, 2009.

/s/ Juan T. Guerrero, Chairman
/s/ Pedro Q. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair
/s/ Bernadita Palacios, Member
/s/ Adelina C. Roberto, Member
/s/ Marian DLG Tudela, Member
/s/ Sixto K. Igisomar, Member
/s/ Francisco P. Rosario, Member

RESOLUTION

OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS RETIREMENT FUND TO CEASE PAYMENT OF EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION REFUNDS

BR 09-003

WHEREAS, the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund ("Retirement Fund") was statutorily created as a pension plan to provide retirement security and other benefits to retired, qualified, prior and present Northern Mariana Island Government ("Government) employees and their eligible dependents; and

WHEREAS, the Retirement Fund Board of Trustees ("Board") are statutorily mandated to direct the management of an actuarially sound pension plan funded by the Government in accord with the constitutional provisions protecting members' rights; and

WHEREAS, the Northern Mariana Island Constitution ("Constitution") protects the accrued benefits of the Retirement Fund's pension system from being diminished and/or impaired; and

WHEREAS, the Board has sought, to no avail, the assistance of the Executive and Legislative Branches in order to address the Retirement Fund's fiscal emergency due to the 2008 world wide decline in investment markets and drastic Retirement Fund drawdowns due to nonpayment of employer contributions and other Government obligations; and

WHEREAS, the CNMI continues to be delinquent in employer contributions and various other obligation despite years of Board and Retirement Fund collection efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Retirement Fund was openly criticized on June 30, 2005 for using invested funds to pay for monthly pension checks and for failing to commence litigation in 2002 by the current head of the Executive Branch of the Government; and

WHEREAS, the Retirement Fund has already fallen below a level of forty percent (40%) total funded accrued actuarial liability of the total obligation of the Fund within the last five (5) years; is currently only thirty nine percent (39%) funded; and has consistently failed to reach a level of fifty percent (50%) total funded accrued actuarial liability of the total obligation of the Fund since fiscal year 2000; and

WHEREAS, Employee Retirement Income Security Act ("ERISA") provides that a pension plan may not make lump sum or other accelerated payments and provides for the cessation of benefit accruals under a plan that is less than 60% funded as well as the cessation of certain contingent benefit payments under the plan.

WHEREAS, private pension programs subject to ERISA laws would have ceased lump sum or other accelerated payments and had benefits frozen if their funding level was currently at the Retirement Fund level; and

WHEREAS, the Board and the Retirement Fund, although not subject to ERISA, looks to case laws interpreting ERISA and case laws from other jurisdictions with similar constitutionally protected pension plans as persuasion in interpreting and implementing laws mandating the management of the Retirement Fund; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 15-98 amended 1 CMC §8356 and increased from ten to fifteen (15) years all eligible Class I Retirement Fund members electing to withdraw their contribution from the Fund; and

WHEREAS, the Fund has had to pay $40,279,146.00 as of May 31, 2009 in order to comply with Public Law 15-98 and 1 CMC §8356; and

WHEREAS, the Board has been for years gravely concerned that the Retirement Fund assets have been and are being severely diminished and/or impaired by the acts and/or omissions of the Government and the Legislature; and

WHEREAS, the CNMI Superior Court issued on June 29,2009 a judgment that the Fund is owed by the CNMI Government $23l,647,938.27; and

WHEREAS, the Board must protect the Retirement Fund's assets for all Retirement Fund members by any means necessary due to the Executive and Legislative Branches non-response to numerous requests for assistance to address the Retirement Fund's current fiscal emergency.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Retirement Fund Board of Trustees, in upholding their fiduciary duty, hereby directs the Retirement Fund management and staff to cease processing refund of employee contributions pursuant to Public Law 15-98 and 1 CMC §8356 until such time as the Retirement Fund is no longer in a fiscal emergency.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this directive will take effect on the l" day of September l, 2009 after notice has been given to all members by publication in newspapers in general circulation in the Northern Mariana Islands on three (3) different occasions, the first notice to be publicized no later than July 15, 2009.

The undersigned duly appointed and authorized representatives of the NMI Retirement Fund, a Public, autonomous agency duly formed pursuant to the laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands hereby certify that the foregoing is an officially sanctioned resolution duly adopted at a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the NMI Retirement Fund, held in accordance with CNMI laws and procedures on the 7th day of July, 2009, and that said resolution is now in full force and effect.

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/s/ Juan T. Guerrero, Chairman
/s/ Pedro Q. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair
/s/ Bernadita Palacios, Member
/s/ Marian DLG Tudela, Member
/s/ Sixto Igisomar, Member
/s/Adelina C. Roberto, Member
/s/ Francisco P. Rosario, Member

Asia

China city tense after police shooting kills 2

URUMQI, China (AP)—The capital of China's western Xinjiang region was tense amid tight security Tuesday, a day after police fatally shot two Uighur men and wounded a third more than a week after deadly ethnic rioting.

It was the first time the government has acknowledged that its security forces opened fire since the violence hit Urumqi on July 5. The government says at least 184 people have been reported killed, most of them Han Chinese, and another 1,680 wounded.

At the site of Monday's shooting, paramilitary police with shields and rifles blocked access to an alley of dingy apartment blocks where many poorer minority Uighurs live.

Troops blocked nonresidents from entering. A band of spikes lay across the road. Roads leading into the main Uighur district near the Grand Bazaar market continued to be blocked.

A police van parked at the mouth of the alley blared messages in the Uighur language, attacking Rebiya Kadeer, the prominent exiled Uighur activist whom the Chinese government blames for inciting the unrest. It has not provided evidence.



AP

A Uighur woman walks past security force officers standing guard in Urumqi, western China's Xinjiang province, Monday, July 13, 2009.

Kadeer, who lives in Washington, D.C., has denied the charges and blames government policies for causing the violence.

In the latest incident, the city government said three Uighur men, who were attacking a fourth Uighur with long knives and batons, turned on police who tried to break up the fight. The police shot and killed two of the men when they ignored warnings, the government said. The third man was wounded and taken to a nearby hospital, where his condition was unknown.

Japan's ruling party could lose power in elections

TOKYO (AP)—The political party that has governed Japan for the last 50 years could be ousted from power in national elections next month —with the opposition boosted by worries over the economy and gaffes by the ruling party.

Prime Minister Taro Aso's Liberal Democratic Party was dealt a crushing defeat over the weekend, losing its majority in a Tokyo municipal election while the opposition made substantive gains.

His announcement Monday that he was dissolving parliament and scheduling elections for Aug. 30 increased the likelihood that the main opposition could take over the powerful lower house of Parliament. The upper house is already controlled by the opposition bloc.

The Liberal Democrats, which have governed Japan for the past 50 years, except a brief period in 1993, have been struggling to maintain their grip on power.

Over the past few years, the party has seen a revolving door of prime ministers, with Aso's two predecessors lasting less than a year. Aso, too, has failed to revitalize the party, which many say has been in power too long to effectively energize voters seeking change in the face of the financial downturn.

"It's time to seek the public's mandate. The issue here is which party can really protect the people's lives and the country," Aso said. "I'm not going to run away."

He said he would dissolve parliament's lower house next week.

ASIAN BRIEFS

RP vows offensive against militants

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine defense chief on Monday ordered a new offensive against al-Qaida-linked militants after they released a kidnapped Italian Red Cross worker, but the humanitarian group proposed an amnesty instead. Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro said the release of 62-year-old Eugenio Vagni after six months of jungle captivity in Abu Sayyaf southern strongholds was an opportunity to crush the militants who have terrorized the southern Philippines for decades. "We will not stop now—that is a fair warning—because we cannot waste this opportunity to put an end to this group," Teodoro told reporters. He said the "unrelenting pursuit" he had ordered did not mean a "shoot-to-kill" policy against the militants, and he would rather see them captured and tried in court.

SKorean police: Hackers extracted data in attacks

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Hackers extracted lists of files from computers that they contaminated with the virus that triggered cyberattacks last week in the United States and South Korea, police in Seoul said Tuesday. The attacks, in which floods of computers tried to connect to a single Web site at the same time to overwhelm the server, caused outages on prominent government-run sites in both countries. The finding means that hackers not only used affected computers for Web attacks, but also attempted to steal information from them. That adds to concern that contaminated computers were ordered to damage their own hard disks or files after the Web assaults.

RP reports 2 more swine flu deaths

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine officials say swine flu-related deaths in the country have risen to three after two more patients died. Health Secretary Francisco Duque says Monday a total of three deaths and 2,668 cases have been recorded in the country since May. He says 95 percent of the patients have recovered. A health department report says the two new fatalities include a 19-year-old male with history of asthma and a 74-year-old man with history of emphysema and frequent hospitalization.

23 militants dead in clashes in NW Pakistan

KHAR, Pakistan (AP)—Pro-government tribesmen killed 23 militants in clashes in Pakistan's volatile northwest in the latest violence between tribal militias and Taliban insurgents, a government official said Tuesday. The fighting took place in the village of Ambar in the Mohmand region, part of the lawless tribal belt along Pakistan's border with Afghanistan where top Taliban and al-Qaida leaders are believed to be hiding. Syed Ahmad Jan, a senior regional administrator, said local tribal militia asked the militants to leave the area late Monday. The militants refused and opened fire, sparking a gun battle that was still raging Tuesday morning, Jan said.

World

Zelaya issues ultimatum: Reinstate me or else

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP)—Ousted President Manuel Zelaya, clearly frustrated with stalled negotiations aimed at resolving the country's political crisis, issued an ultimatum to the interim government Monday: Reinstate me or else.

Zelaya delivered his message at a news conference in Nicaragua, where he arrived Sunday night following a brief trip to Washington.

At the same time, the de facto government installed by leaders of the coup that forcibly exiled Zelaya on June 28 tried to return life to normal, successfully urging tens of thousands of Honduran teachers and students to return to class Monday.

Interim President Roberto Micheletti said a Honduran negotiating team could return to the bargaining table as early as this weekend to try to end the stalemate caused by the coup. Two previous rounds of talks mediated by Costa Rican President Oscar Arias failed to produce a deal.



Zelaya

At the swearing-in ceremony of a new foreign minister Monday, Micheletti said his team of delegates was "ready for another meeting."

But Zelaya said Monday that he was "giving the coup an ultimatum."

If the interim government does not agree to reinstate him at the next round of negotiations, he said, "the mediation effort will be considered failed and other measures will be taken." He did not specify what actions he might take.

Zelaya accused the Micheletti government of "using" the talks "as a means to distract attention," and said the interim regime had "systematically increased repression" against demonstrators, journalists and others.

Belfast Catholics riot over Protestant parade

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP)—Masked and hooded Belfast Catholics hurled gasoline bombs, fireworks and other makeshift weapons at police Monday as the most bitterly divisive day on the Northern Ireland calendar reached an ugly end.

Several rioters and at least seven officers were injured, none seriously, when Irish nationalists in Ardoyne, a militant Catholic enclave of north Belfast, tried to block a parade by the Orange Order, Northern Ireland's major Protestant brotherhood.

Tens of thousands of Orangemen spent Monday mounting hundreds of similar parades across this British territory, almost all of them trouble-free, in an annual stress test for the province's fragile peace.

More than 1,000 Orangemen and their accompanying bandsmen eventually did march down the main road past Ardoyne to the beat of a lone drum —but only after riot police fought an hourlong street battle backed by a surveillance helicopter and three massive mobile water cannons.

At one point, masked Catholic rioters on store rooftops directed a deluge of Molotov cocktails, bricks and golf balls on riot police below. The officers were protected with flame-retardant suits, helmets and shields.

Later, as the water-cannon gunners sought to take rioters' legs out from under them, Catholics wearing scarves over their faces took cover behind low brick walls and post boxes. They threw rocks, bricks, bottles and even planks of wood that bounced harmlessly off the armored sides and metal-grilled windows of the water-cannon vehicles.

Medvedev cheered in breakaway Georgian region

TBILISI, Georgia (AP)—Russian President Dmitry Medvedev was greeted by raucous crowds cheering and chanting "Thank you!" when he visited South Ossetia in a trip showing off Russia's ties to the breakaway Georgian region.

Georgian officials called Monday's visit —the first by Medvedev since last year's war between Russia and Georgia —a provocation.

Russian TV showed footage of Medvedev being cheered as he left his limousine to walk in South Ossetia's main city, Tskhinvali. He later met with the region's leader, Eduard Kokoity, and pledged that Russia would complete the building and infrastructure projects in South Ossetia.

"I want to express my gratitude for inviting me to visit this new country, this new state, South Ossetia, which appeared as a result of difficult, dramatic events and which the Russian people have certainly supported," Medvedev told Kokoity in televised comments.

Kokoity said, "The South Ossetian people are grateful for your support, for recognizing our nation (as independent). And our ancient nation of South Ossetia thanks you for saving our tiny people."

Russian news agencies said Medvedev also visited a Russian military base in Tskhinvali and quoted him as saying that there were a "number of projects for the economic and social restoration of the republic."

"There is a lot of work to be done," he was quoted as saying.

South Ossetia and another Georgia region, Abkhazia, have long had de-facto independence from Georgian government control, and Russia has backed their separatist governments, giving residents Russian passports and providing other aid.

WORLD BRIEFS

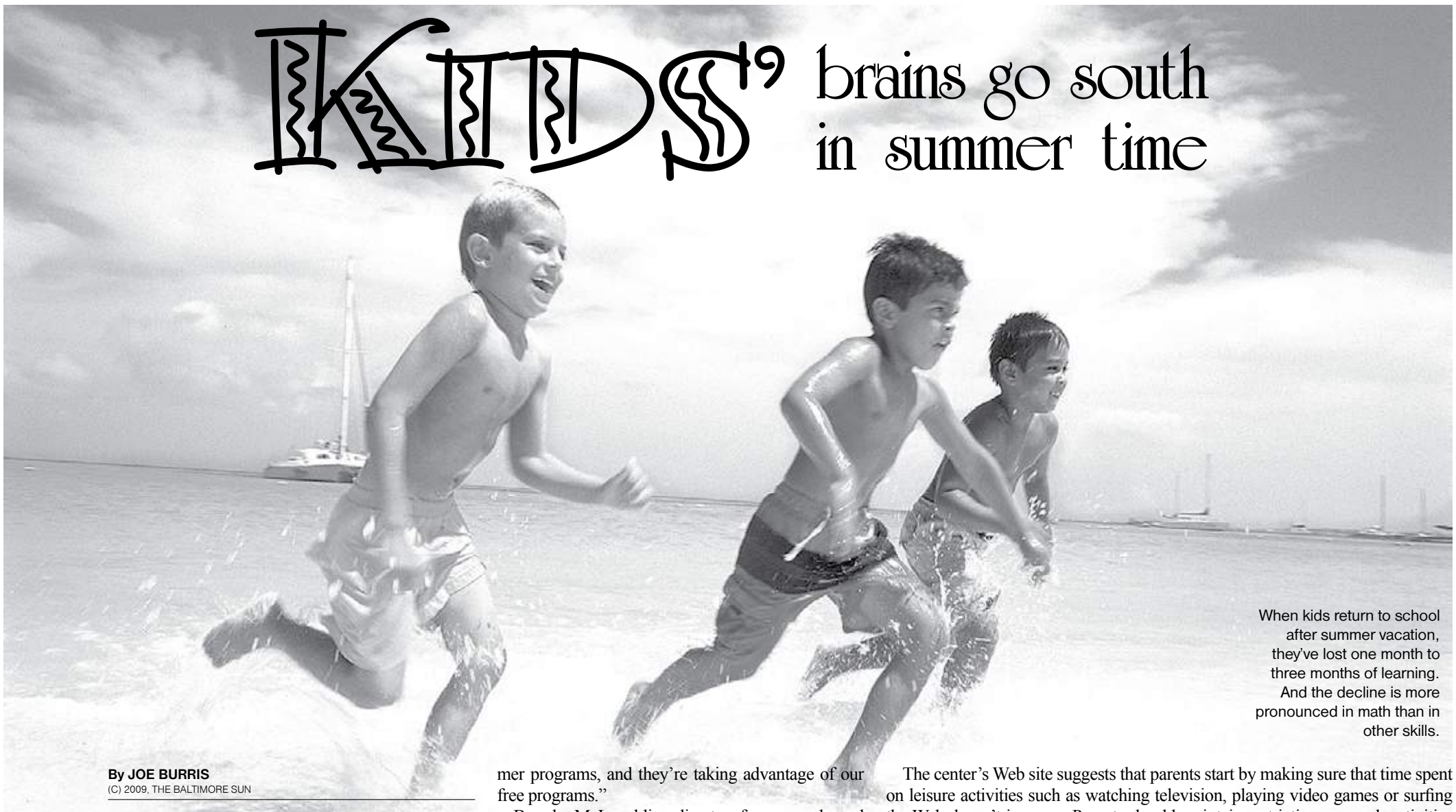
British girl's heart heals itself after transplant

LONDON (AP)—British doctors designed a radical solution to save a girl with major heart problems in 1995: they implanted a donor heart directly onto her own failing heart. After 10 years with two blood pumping organs, Hannah Clark's faulty one did what many experts had thought impossible: it healed itself enough so that doctors could remove the donated heart. But she also had a price to pay: the drugs Clark took to prevent her body from rejecting the donated heart led to malignant cancer that required chemotherapy. Details of Clark's revolutionary transplant and follow-up care were published online Tuesday in the medical journal Lancet.

Demjanjuk faces 27,900 accessory to murder counts

MUNICH (AP)—The legal saga of John Demjanjuk neared its final chapter as prosecutors set the stage for one of Germany's highest-profile war crime trials in years—formally charging the retired U.S. auto worker with involvement in the murder of 27,900 people at a Nazi death camp. The Ukrainian-born Demjanjuk was once sentenced in Israel to death, then acquitted by the country's Supreme Court in 1993 of being the notorious guard known as "Ivan the Terrible" at the Treblinka death camp. Now the 89-year-old stands accused of being part of the death machine at another camp in Poland—Sobibor —and a Germany more than 60 years removed from World War II will revisit the demons of its past once again. For Germany, the decision to try Demjanjuk was swift: formal charges relating to his alleged time as a Sobibor guard in 1943 were filed just two months after Demjanjuk landed in the country after a lengthy but fruitless court battle to avoid deportation from the U.S.

Campus Life



KIDS' brains go south in summer time

When kids return to school after summer vacation, they've lost one month to three months of learning. And the decline is more pronounced in math than in other skills.

By JOE BURRIS
(C) 2009, THE BALTIMORE SUN

Summer can be a young mind's enemy.

Not only are kids discouraged from tackling new concepts during lazy days of pool time and backyard play, but the long break from school, if not reinforced with summer learning, erodes knowledge gained from the previous school year.

The Boston-based Family Education Network says that summer can be a "brain drain." It points to a University of Missouri study suggesting that, when kids return to school after summer vacation, they've lost one month to three months of learning. And the decline is more pronounced in math than in other skills.

So how can parents keep the books open and knowledge fresh without hearing that the mere thought of summer learning is "borrrrrring."

Many parents appear to be taking advantage of free programs offered by libraries. For example, "Our programs are all packed," said Kathy Casserly, youth services specialist for the Baltimore County Public Library. "Because of the economy, people don't have the money to take their kids to some summer programs, and they're taking advantage of our free programs."

Brenda McLaughlin, director for research and evaluation at Johns Hopkins University's National Center for Summer Learning, said that family income levels play a part in how much schooling children retain over the summer, particularly with reading skills.

"Middle- and upper-income kids tend to either stagnate or make slight gains in skills, but lower income kids lose two to three months of reading skills," she said. "Access to books and activities has a lot to do with it. Middle and upper income kids tend to do a lot more activities to promote literacy skills."

McLaughlin said that the cumulative loss of learning skills over summers can be so significant that "by the end of the fifth grade, lower-income kids are about 2 1/2 years behind middle- and upper-income kids in reading."

McLaughlin said that kids of all backgrounds can take advantage of resources available for summer learning, particularly those at local libraries. She added that parents should not only take part in libraries' summer reading programs, but should discuss the books with their children.

"One of the simplest things is to first find out what your child's interests are at the moment," she said, "then make it a goal to find out more about that topic. You have to meet kids where they are."

The center's Web site suggests that parents start by making sure that time spent on leisure activities such as watching television, playing video games or surfing the Web doesn't increase. Parents should maintain restrictions on such activities just as they would during the school year, it says.

While summer programs and education-based summer camps are ideal to ensure that school knowledge is retained over the summer, much retention can be ensured by performing simple tasks in and around the house, according to the center. For those looking to keep math skills sharp, the center suggests that students measure items around the house and yard, add and subtract prices at the grocery store, cook (a good way to learn fractions) and track daily temperatures.

The Family Education Network says on its Web site that retaining math skills is so crucial to long-time learning that "if you can't decide whether to sign your child up for 'Shakespeare's Theater' or 'Math Magic' at the local community center, go with the math."

The Family Education Network says that parents can also call the curriculum coordinator at a child's school district and consult education departments at local colleges and universities to find the summer activities offered.

Avoiding kids' summer brain drain

By JOE BURRIS
(C) 2009, THE BALTIMORE SUN

Avoiding kids' summer slide:

Use sports to reinforce math.

For example, practice multiplication tables by making each point in a basketball game worth 7 points (or 8 or 9), says Reading Rockets, an Arlington, Va.-based educational resource project (readingrockets.org).

Learn outdoors.

Set up a tent in the backyard and explore the surrounding geography, says Great Schools (greatschools.net), a nonprofit organization that helps parents choose schools.

Discuss books.

The Boston-based Family Education Network (familyeducation.com) says that parents should not only get involved with summer reading activities but come up with creative ways to bring stories to life, such as giving bedtime directions in the voice of your favorite storybook character. Parents and children can write short reviews of books.

Volunteer at local organizations.

It's a good way to keep learning fresh, and "creates intentional learning experiences," says Brenda McLaughlin, director for research and evaluation at the National Center for Summer Learning.

Play KenKen.

TeachersFirst, a teachers' resource Web site, suggests kids keep their skills sharp by playing this arithmetic and logic puzzle invented by Japanese math teacher Tetsuya Miyamoto. The name comes from the Japanese word for "cleverness" and the game is similar to the math game sudoku.

School-age kids to be focus of flu prevention

By DAVID BROWN and SPENCER S. HSU
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—School-age children will be a key target population for a pandemic flu vaccine in the fall, and they may get their shots at school in a mass vaccination campaign not seen since the polio epidemics of the 1950s.

The federal government should get about 100 million doses of vaccine by mid-October, if the current production by five companies goes as planned. However, enough vaccine for wide use by the 120 million people especially vulnerable to infection with the newly emerged strain of H1N1 influenza virus won't be available until later in the fall.

Those were among the messages administration officials delivered to about 500 state, territorial, city and tribal health officials Thursday at a "flu summit" held at the National Institutes of Health's Bethesda, Md., campus.

President Obama, speaking by audio link from the G8 summit in L'Aquila, Italy urged the audience to take "complete ownership" of preparations for what he termed a "significant outbreak" of H1N1 flu in the next few six months.

"We want to make sure that we are not promoting panic, but we are promoting vigilance and preparation," he said. He added that "the most important thing for us to do is to make sure that state and local officials prepare now to implement a vaccination program in the fall."

Children between six months and 18 years old, pregnant women, adults with chronic illnesses, and healthcare workers would likely be first in line for the pandemic flu vaccine, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius told the gathering.

There are about 60 million school-age children, ages 5 to 18. Other high-priority groups would be about 20 million children not old enough to attend school, 3 million women who will be pregnant in the next six months and about 32 million people between 19 and 64 who have serious underlying illnesses that put them at high risk of complications from influenza.

Health care workers will also be among the high-priority groups to get vaccines.

Life & Style

Searchers shovel Northwest dirt seeking giant worm

By NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MOSCOW, Idaho (AP)—The giant Palouse earthworm has taken on mythic qualities in this vast agricultural region that stretches from eastern Washington into the Idaho panhandle—its very name evoking the fictional sandworms from "Dune" or those vicious creatures from the movie "Tremors."

The worm is said to secrete a lily-like smell when handled, spit at predators, and live in burrows 15 feet deep. There have been only a handful of sightings.

But scientists hope to change that this summer with researchers scouring the Palouse region in hopes of finding more of the giant earthworms. Conservationists also want the Obama administration to protect the worm as an endangered species, even though little research has been done on it.

The worm may be elusive, but there's no doubt it exists, said Jodi Johnson-Maynard, a University of Idaho professor who is leading the search for the worm. To prove it, she pulled out a glass tube containing the preserved remains of a fat, milky-white worm. One of Johnson-Maynard's graduate students found this specimen in 2005, and it is the only confirmed example of the species.

The worm in the tube is about 6 inches long, well short of the 3 feet that early observers of the worms in the late 1890s described. Documented collections of the species, known locally as GPE, have occurred only in 1978, 1988, 1990 and 2005.

The farmers who work the rich soil of the Palouse—2 million acres of rolling wheat fields near the Idaho-Washington border south of Spokane—also have had little experience with the worm.

Gary Budd, who manages a grain elevator in Uniontown, said no farmer he knows has talked about seeing the worm. He compared the creature to Elvis.

"He gets spotted once in awhile too," Budd joked.

Johnson-Maynard and her team of worm hunters are working this summer at a university research farm and using three different methods to try and find a living worm.

One involves just digging a hole and sifting the soil through a strainer, looking for any worms that can be studied.

The second involves old-fashioned chemical warfare, pouring a liquid solution of vinegar and mustard onto the ground, irritating worms until they come to the surface.

The third method is new to this search, using electricity to shock worms to the surface.

"The electro shocker is pretty cool," said Joanna Blaszczak, a student at Cornell who is spending her summer working to find the worm alongside Shan Xu, a graduate student from Chengdu, China, and support scientist Karl Umiker.

The shocker can deliver up to 480 volts. That makes it dangerous to touch, and it could potentially fry a specimen.

On a recent day, Umiker drove eight 3-foot-long metal rods into the ground in a small circle and connected them to batteries. Then he flipped the switches. The only sound for several minutes was the hum of a cooling fan.

"I'm kind of bummed we haven't seen anything yet," Umiker said.

Eventually, a small rust-colored worm dug its way to the surface. It was not a GPE, but it was collected for study anyway.

The search for the giant worm is reminiscent of efforts in Louisiana, Florida and the swamps of eastern Arkansas to find the elusive ivory-billed woodpecker. The large, black-and-white bird was believed to be extinct until a reported sighting five years ago stirred national experts and federal funding to launch a full-blown campaign to verify its existence. Search efforts later dwindled after biologists and volunteers were unable to find the evidence they were looking for.

The GPE was described as common in the Palouse in the 1890s, according to an 1897 article in The American Naturalist by Frank Smith. Smith's work was based on four samples sent to him by R.W. Doane of Washington State University in nearby Pullman.

Massive agricultural development soon consumed nearly all of the unique Palouse Prairie—a seemingly endless ocean of steep, silty dunes—and appeared to deal a fatal blow to the worm.

They were considered extinct when Idaho graduate student Yaniria Sanchez-de Leon in 2005 stuck a shovel into the ground to collect a soil sample and found the worm that now is in the tube in Johnson-Maynard's office.

Conservation groups quickly petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect the worm as an endangered species, citing as proof the lack of sightings. But the agency said there simply was not enough scientific information to merit a listing.

Conservationists recently filed a second request, saying they had more information. They are also hoping the Obama administration will be more friendly than the Bush administration. The GPE would be the only worm protected as an endangered species.

Doug Zimmer of the Fish and Wildlife Service in Seattle said the agency isn't ready to comment on the petition.

"It's always good to see new information and good science on any species," Zimmer said.

Farmers are keeping a wary eye on the process.

"The concern is whether a listing is going to end up curtailing farming activities," said Dan Wood of the Washington State Farm Bureau. "I don't know if people plan to stop all farming for the possibility of a worm being somewhere."

Most earthworms found in the Northwest originated in Europe, arriving on plants or in soil shipped to the New World. The giant Palouse earthworm is one of the few native species, and has become quite popular with the public.

While it's tough to come by a live GPE, visitors seem happy to take a picture with a dead one. Johnson-Maynard said she has received calls from tourists who want to come to her office and be photographed with the specimen.

"A lot of people are curious about it," she said.



AP

In this photo made Tuesday, July 7, 2009, Joanna Blaszczak, a student at Cornell University, wires up an electric probe at a worm research test site at a University of Idaho research farm in Moscow, Idaho.

ON THE WEB

http://www.palouseprairie.org/invertebrates/palouseworm.html



AP

In this photo made Tuesday, July 7, 2009, the only verified sample of a giant Palouse Earthworm specimen is preserved in this test tube, as seen at the University of Idaho in Moscow, Idaho. The straight line in the worm segment on the bottom is from a dissection done to study the worm.

ABC News' Bob Woodruff returns to Iraq

NEW YORK (AP)—ABC News correspondent Bob Woodruff returned to Iraq on Monday for the first time since he was nearly killed there by a roadside bomb more than three years ago.

Woodruff is on a reporting trip that left Washington with Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The ABC newsman is staying on U.S. military bases while he is in Iraq.

Woodruff suffered a serious brain injury from the Jan. 29, 2006, bomb that exploded while he was riding in an Iraqi army tank, his upper body exposed as he stood in the hatch. He returned to ABC News after an arduous 13-month recovery, and he's done extensive reporting on the plight of people who were severely injured in the war.

"I have wanted to `get back on the horse again' since my recovery," Woodruff said in a blog post. "This will be a different horse, probably not as big, not as fast ..."



AP

In this June 16, 2008 file photo, ABC news journalist Bob Woodruff poses in the press room at the 67th Annual Peabody Awards at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York.

He said he owed it to his family and colleagues and the injured "brothers and sisters" he's been reporting about not to venture into battle zones.

It wasn't an easy decision to return, he said. Woodruff and his wife, Lee, wrote the book "In an Instant: A Family's Journey of Love and Healing," about his progression from not even remembering his twin daughters to being able to report again.

He said he wanted to get a picture of how the war is going and also interview medical personnel.

Bad weather foiled his first report, scheduled to air on "World News" Monday. A sandstorm in Kirkuk, where Woodruff and Mullen were, disrupted ABC's satellite capabilities and made them unable to transmit the story, the network said.

Police: Son of late porn mogul suspect in killing

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—The son of a late San Francisco pornography mogul was being held without bail Monday on suspicion of killing his former girlfriend and fleeing with their 1-year-old daughter, prompting an Amber Alert that ended with his arrest off a highway near Sacramento, authorities said.

Danielle Keller, 29, was found beaten to death Sunday evening in the backyard of a home in Novato, north of San Francisco.

A neighbor, Lynn Treboutat, said she saw James Raphael Mitchell run from the home with his screaming daughter, then drive away Sunday evening. The toddler's first birthday party was held at the home Sunday, Treboutat said Monday.

Mitchell, 27, was arrested off Interstate 80 in Citrus Heights after police found him and the girl, Samantha, unharmed about five hours after she disappeared, authorities said.

He's being held without bail in Marin County Jail on suspicion of murder, kidnapping and violating a restraining order.

Mitchell is listed in his jail report as a theater owner. His lawyer, former San Francisco District Attorney Terence Hallinan, wouldn't comment on the allegations.

Mitchell's father is Jim Mitchell, part of a pioneering family owned adult-film empire who directed the 1972 porn classic, "Behind the Green Door." The movie was one of the first X-rated flicks with a plot line.

In 1969, the Mitchell brothers opened a still-running adult theater in San Francisco. In their heyday, the brothers faced multiple arrests on obscenity charges and ultimately produced hundreds of films, including "Resurrection of Eve" and "Sodom and Gomorrah: The Last 7 Days."

Jim Mitchell was convicted in 1991 of manslaughter and weapons charges in the shooting death of his brother Artie in Marin County. The slaying led to a spectacular trial, and the elder Mitchell served half of a six-year prison sentence.

He died on July 12, 2007, two years to the day before the alleged murder and kidnapping. His funeral was attended by politicians and pornographers alike.

Jackson's mother seeks more influence over trust

LINDA DEUTSCH
AP SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT



AP

Michael Jackson's siblings, from left, Tito Jackson, Jackie Jackson, Marlon Jackson, Randy Jackson, partially obscured, Janet Jackson, LaToya Jackson and children Paris and Prince Michael Jackson stand on the stage at the memorial service for music legend Michael Jackson at the Staples Center in Los Angeles on Tuesday, July 7, 2009.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The two men named by Michael Jackson to administer his estate confirmed their powers with a judge Monday, despite new opposition by Katherine Jackson's lawyers to gain for her a larger say in her late son's affairs.

The dispute continued through the weekend between the two sides and was detailed in documents filed with Superior Court Judge Mitchell Beckloff.

Beckloff agreed with the men's lawyers and signed off on the papers needed for special administrators John Branca and John McClain to begin doing business on behalf of the estate, at least through Aug. 3.

The judge also formally revoked his earlier order, which gave Katherine Jackson limited powers over some of her son's possessions when it was believed he died without a will.

■ ■ ■ ■

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A Los Angeles coroner's official says toxicology reports that may determine the cause of Michael Jackson's death could be completed this week.

Assistant Chief Coroner Ed Winter said Monday that some results from tests to determine what substances Jackson had in his body when he died are in. The remaining results are expected at the end of this week or early next week.

Winter said his office would announce when all the tests are done, then publicly release the results the next day.

Jackson died June 25.

Authorities are investigating claims the pop star consumed large amounts of prescription medications. The powerful sedative Diprivan, normally only administered in hospitals, was among items found in his home.

■ ■ ■ ■

Attorney Paul Gordon Hoffman, a member of the team representing Branca and McClain, said in a nine-page declaration that as late as 4:10 p.m. Sunday, an attorney for the Jackson family sent an e-mail "stating that it was his intent to have the order reflect that Katherine Jackson should be treated like a third trustee."

Hoffman argued that to gain that power, attorneys for Katherine Jackson would need to appear Monday and submit a competing proposed order that would allow this.

No competing order was submitted.

No hearing was held and the judge signed the papers without hearing further argument.

Attorney Burt Levitch, who appeared for Katherine Jackson, referred questions to New York lawyer Londell McMillan. A call to McMillan was not immediately returned on Monday.

Attorney Howard Weitzman, who represents Branca, refused to comment.

Hoffman said in his filing that Branca and McClain have been submitting to Katherine Jackson's lawyers "voluminous and continuous information on the business opportunities being presented and their responses or intended responses."

He said while the law firm has been able to reach agreement with the Attorney General's office, which is a party to the case, it "has been unable to reach an agreement with counsel for the Jacksons."

Hoffman said that Katherine Jackson's lawyers "have stated that they were pleased with the information being provided, and that their objections were not predicated on the actual provision of information, but rather on the lack of a formal role for Katherine Jackson or a court-ordered requirement that the information be provided."

Hoffman cited the transcript of the July 6 hearing in which the judge said that Branca and McClain "are for now for the next month at the helm of the ship." At the time, the judge suggested that they keep Katherine Jackson informed but said, "I'm not telling them what they have to do to do their job."

"There are numerous pressing matters that require immediate attention," Hoffman said in his declaration. He asked for administration authority "so that McClain and Branca can begin to take the actions necessary to preserve the assets of the estate and address the needs of the decedent's minor children."

Jackson died on June 25, leaving a will which provided for a trust to be administered by Branca and McClain. The beneficiaries named were his mother, his three children and an unnamed group of children's charities.

LA mayor: City should cover Jackson memorial costs

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa (vee-yah-ry-GOH'-sah) has criticized his staff for setting up a Web site seeking donations to cover the city's cost from the Michael Jackson memorial.

Villaraigosa says the city is responsible for protecting public safety and should pick up the $1.4 million tab for police overtime and other services from the event last week at Staples Center.

The mayor, who was on vacation in South Africa during the memorial, called the city's donation Web site "ridiculous." He says he will not ask the public or Staples Center owner AEG Live to pay.

It was not immediately clear on Monday how much money the site raised or if the money would be returned.

10 years for TV's favorite sponge



AP

In this Nov. 7, 2004 file photo, Tom Kenny, the voice of the undersea cartoon counterculture icon "SpongeBob SquarePants," poses for a photograph in Santa Monica, Calif.

NEW YORK (AP)—At a festival in Germany, when six women walked by wearing specially-created "SpongeBob SquarePants" shirts, Stephen Hillenburg's wife nudged him: Why don't you tell them who you are?

Hillenburg, who created SpongeBob and all his undersea friends at the Krusty Krab, declined.

"I thought that it was so surreal, they probably wouldn't believe me," he recalled Monday.

Believe this: television's favorite animated sponge is now 10 years old, and Nickelodeon celebrates this weekend with a blowout bash. Eleven new episodes and countdowns of fan favorites will air. A documentary on the series debuts Tuesday on sister station VH1.

"SpongeBob SquarePants" has been TV's most popular animated show for children aged 2 to 11 for seven years now, and a not-so-secret factor to its appeal is that many parents —and even people without kids —love it, too. It's a cash cow that has generated $8 billion in merchandising revenue for Nickelodeon.

The show is seen in 25 different languages and counts two world leaders, President Barack Obama and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who say they watch with their children.

Hillenburg is an artist and also a scientist who taught, and the inspiration for many of his show's characters came from a comic he wrote, "The Intertidal Zone," designed to teach his students at the Ocean Institute about tidal pool characters.

Through 125 episodes and guest shots by the likes of David Bowie, LeBron James, Whoopi Goldberg and Ray Liotta, the series has evolved and explored other characters to avoid repeating itself. But the essence of the show remains SpongeBob and his sweet innocence, Hillenburg said.

"I never really imagined a show about a sponge going past our first season," he said. "I thought maybe we'd have a cult following, and we'd be gone after one season. I'm in disbelief that we're here talking."

Cyma Zarghami, president of Nickelodeon and MTVN Kids and Family Group, was one of four executives in the room when "SpongeBob SquarePants" was screened for the first time. Their immediate reaction was to see it again, both because they liked it and it was unlike anything they'd ever seen before, she said.

The show's optimism, as it first appeared a few months after President Clinton's impeachment trial, was key to its rise, she said.

"You can put all of the right ingredients into the pot when making a show like this, but there is some kind of magic ingredient that you can't account for or predict, and that sends it into the stratosphere," she said.

The first episode aired on July 19, 1999. A month later, the show's first celebrity guest voices appeared —Ernest Borgnine and Tim Conway.

This weekend's "SpongeBob SquarePants" marathon will include, besides the new shows, separate top-10 countdowns of favorite episodes as selected by fans and celebrities.

Nick currently has enough episodes on order to bring the total to 152 over the next year. The success of "The Simpsons" notwithstanding, that's an unusually large amount of shows in a television genre where they usually come and go quickly.

Zarghami said she sees no end in sight.

"As long as we are able to sustain the integrity of the characters and the quality of the program, I think we should continue," she said. "I don't think there will be a point of diminishing returns."

Since the "SpongeBob" movie in 2004, Hillenburg has stepped back into an executive producer's role. He no longer writes or runs the show on a day-to-day basis, but reviews each episode and delivers suggestions.

He's working on two other TV projects that he doesn't want to discuss and does a fair amount of painting.

"I figure when I'm pretty old I can still paint," he said. "I don't know about running shows."

Michael Jackson concert merchandise now for sale

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Michael Jackson's comeback concerts will never happen, but you can still get the T-shirt.

Merchandise from Jackson's "This Is It" tour, which was scheduled to begin Monday in London, will be available online and at retailers across the United States.

Jackson helped design the concert T-shirts and other show souvenirs, said Peter LoFrumento, a spokesman for the merchandising company, Bravado.

"Michael was very adamant about not just doing T-shirts and posters and key chains," he said. "He wanted to do something special and make it really innovative and different, things that were functional and fun and that his fans would like."


Jackson

Among the items for sale: T-shirts commemorating the first and second nights of the concerts at London's O2 arena, belt buckles, caps, sunglasses and mugs. A varsity jacket modeled after the one Jackson wore in the "Thriller" video will also be available.

Jackson died June 25 in Los Angeles while preparing for the 50-date concert tour.

Seacrest signs deal for 'Idol' and new projects



NEW YORK (AP)—Ryan Seacrest has signed a lucrative new deal that keeps him hosting "American Idol" through 2012 as well as participating in new projects.

The partnership, announced Monday by 19 Entertainment, a wholly owned subsidiary of CKX Inc., provides an opportunity for on-air-personality/producer Seacrest and his Ryan Seacrest Productions banner to work with "American Idol" creator Simon Fuller on new entertainment endeavors.

Fuller's 19 Entertainment has created and produced TV hits including "American Idol" and "So You Think You Can Dance."

Although the announcement specified no dollar figure, The Hollywood Reporter pegged the deal at $45 million.

Besides "American Idol," Seacrest, 34, is host of the radio countdown show "American Top 40," as well as a nationally syndicated radio show for Clear Channel's 102.7 KIIS-FM. He also executive produces and co-hosts "Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve With Ryan Seacrest" and holds the titles of managing editor and lead anchor of E! Entertainment News.



Remembering you with love each day, although we are apart we are comforted by the knowledge that God has you in His keeping. We have you in our hearts.

First Year Death Anniversary

We, the family of the late

Daniel Duenas Babauta



Humbly invite our relatives and friends to join us in prayer as we commemorate the passing of our dearly beloved unto eternal life.

Mass of intention is being offered daily from July 11 to 19, 2009 at 6:00 a.m. at Kristo Rai Parish.

On Sunday, July 19, 2009, rosary will be prayed at 5:30 a.m. at Kristo Rai Parish followed by the Eucharistic Celebration at 6:00 a.m.

Your presence, thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.

Dangkulo na Si Yu'us Ma'ase

Remedios Q. Babauta, Children and Grandchildren

Neil Patrick Harris to host CBS' Emmycast

NEW YORK (AP)—Neil Patrick Harris, who won critical acclaim hosting last month's Tonys, will fill the same role for the prime-time Emmys.


Patrick

He had been rumored for more than a week to have the job. CBS made it official Monday.

"After having had such a hoot hosting the Tonys, I was thrilled to get the call about the prime-time Emmys," said Harris, adding that he looks forward to "adding my own voice" to the ceremony: "But which voice to choose? I'm torn between gangsta, foppish Brit, and robot. Really proud of my robot. We'll see what happens on the night."

Harris, 36, will also serve as a producer for the CBS broadcast, which will air live Sept. 20 from the Nokia Theatre in Los Angeles.

Harris, who begins his fifth season on the CBS comedy "How I Met Your Mother" in the fall, has landed a Golden Globe nomination and two Emmy nominations in his role as womanizing Barney Stinson.

He has appeared on Broadway in "Cabaret" and "Proof," and won a Web following in Joss Whedon's zany "Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog." He first gained stardom in the title role of the ABC comedy "Doogie Howser, M.D." (1989-1993), playing a genius teenage doctor.

MOVIE REVIEW

New 'Harry Potter' goes to head of class

DAVID GERMAIN
AP MOVIE WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Harry Potter has kept his fans waiting for two years, the longest school break they have had to endure for a new movie adventure about the teen wizard.

It's been worth the wait.

"Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince," the sixth movie in the fantasy franchise based on J.K. Rowling's books, is the franchise's best so far, blending rich drama and easy camaraderie among the actors with the visual spectacle that until now has been the real star of the series.

The hocus-pocus of it all nearly takes a back seat to the story and characters this time, and the film is the better for that. It doesn't skimp on the Quidditch action, sorcery duels or occult pyrotechnics, but those are simply part of the show, not the main attraction.

Previous installments played out in a supernatural bubble bearing little connection to our ordinary little Muggle world. "Half-Blood Prince" brims with authentic people and honest interaction—hormonal teens bonding with great humor, heartache that will resonate with anyone who remembers the pangs of first love.

Drop the magic act, and Hogwarts could be any school of self-absorbed geeks, jocks, popular kids and outcasts trying to maneuver through the day. Even the class bad boy provides insight into the behavior of bullies.

"Half-Blood Prince" escalates the peril for Harry (Daniel Radcliffe) and his best pals, Hermione Granger (Emma Watson) and Ron Weasley (Rupert Grint), while giving the threesome that first collaborated as prepubescent kids their best platform yet to show their maturing acting chops.

David Yates, who made 2007's "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix," returns to direct, his deepening confidence and comfort with the Potter realm on display throughout.

Three distinctive directors—Chris Columbus, Alfonso Cuaron and Mike Newell—made the first four movies. Along with Yates on No. 5, the filmmakers all brought their own touches and baubles, but there was a sameness about the series that was growing tiresome by Yates' first one.

This time, Yates stays true to the Rowling recipe yet infuses the film with a freshness and energy that makes it seem like a new start, not the stale old chapter six it could have been.

Though the movie drags a bit toward the end, screenwriter Steve Kloves—who adapted the first four books and returns after a one-film hiatus—generally keeps the intricate plot rolling breathlessly.

Harry's big challenge this school year is a clandestine assignment by Hogwarts headmaster Dumbledore (Michael Gambon), who enlists his protege to retrieve a critical memory that new Professor Horace Slughorn (Jim Broadbent) possesses about young Tom Riddle, the future dark Lord Voldemort.

Academy Award winner Broadbent gives the best performance yet in a "Harry Potter" flick, mingling a cock-of-the-walk flamboyance with the deep melancholy of a teacher bearing the shame of disappointment in both himself and a star pupil gone bad.

The usual teen high jinks and crises lighten the story with plenty of laughs. Romantic entanglements—which have gradually preoccupied Harry, Hermione, Ron and other classmates as they stumbled into puberty—burst out like a wicked case of acne this year.


AP
In this image released by Warner Bros., Emma Watson, center, Daniel Radcliffe, right, and Rupert Grint are shown in a scene from "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince."

Ron is dating bubble-headed bimbo Lavender Brown (Jessie Cave), putting Hermione into a jealous snit. Harry's got his own love triangle, falling for Ron's sister, Ginny (Bonnie Wright), who's dating another student.

Along with a romantic rival, Harry has a more dangerous foe in Draco Malfoy (Tom Felton), his bullying tormentor, now a torn and troubled youth himself as an agent of Voldemort.

Radcliffe, Watson and Grint have lived these roles for so long—almost half their lives—that Harry, Hermione and Ron seem like second nature to them. Whether their acting careers flourish after "Harry Potter" or not, they have left an impressive little body of work with these three characters alone, developing them into full-blooded youths that feel real despite their fantastical surroundings.

Most fans know the shocker in store involving Dumbledore and the ominous Professor Snape (Alan Rickman). Like their young costars, Gambon and Rickman live and breathe these characters by now, Dumbledore a towering presence of grace and nobility, Snape a delightful cold fish whose actions reveal his tiger-shark stripes.

Others among the returning favorites are Robbie Coltrane as Harry's mountainous ally Hagrid, Maggie Smith as prim Professor McGonagall, Julie Walters as Ron and Ginny's genial mom, Evanna Lynch as ditzy Luna Lovegood, and Helena Bonham Carter, who's a wicked wonder as Bellatrix Lestrange, one of Voldemort's fiercest fanatics.

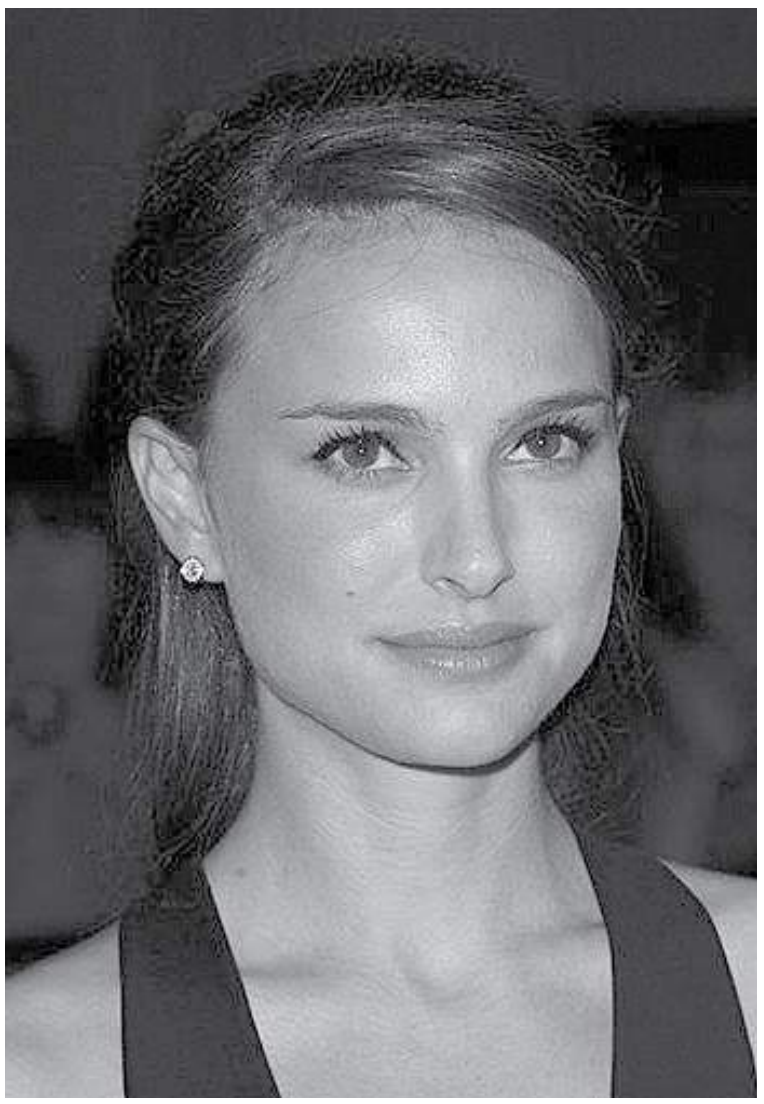
Visual-effects technology definitely have caught up with Rowling's imagination—and the filmmakers have some rowdy fun with their splendid images.

The Quidditch match on flying broomsticks is like airborne rugby, the way the players hammer into one another. And the broomsticks between the boys' legs take on a bawdy phallic look that wryly complements the sexual themes emerging among the teens.

Director Yates is also making the two-part adaptation of the seventh and final book, the movies due out in November 2010 and July 2011. "Half-Blood Prince" should leave fans as eager for those last movies as a high-school junior is for graduation day.

"Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince," a Warner Bros. release, runs 153 minutes. Three and a half stars out of four.

Natalie Portman joins the cast of 'Thor'



AP

In this May 9, 2009 file photo, Actress Natalie Portman attends the 2009 White House Correspondents' Dinner at the Washington Hilton in Washington.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Star Wars" co-star Natalie Portman is storming back into action films with a role in the comic-book adaptation "Thor."

The 28-year-old Portman has been cast as Jane Foster, who was a nurse and first love of the title character in the Marvel Comics. According to Marvel Studios, the character is being updated for the movie version of "Thor," in which the Norse warrior is cast down to Earth to live among humans.

Chris Hemsworth stars as Thor in the movie, which begins shooting early next year. It is due in theaters May 20, 2011. Kenneth Branagh is directing "Thor."

The movie is part of an ambitious schedule for Marvel Studios, including "Iron Man 2," "The First Avenger: Captain America" and "The Avengers."

Fawcett friend to publish diary

NEW YORK (AP)—One of Farrah Fawcett's closest friends, Alana Stewart, is publishing a diary she kept as the actress battled cancer and then died last month.

Publisher William Morrow, an imprint of HarperCollins, says "My Journey With Farrah" will be released in August. Some of the proceeds will be donated to the Farrah Fawcett Foundation for cancer research.

Fawcett, the pinup icon and "Charlie's Angels" star, died June 25 at age 62. Stewart, an actress and former wife of rock star Rod Stewart, has appeared in such films as "Swing Shift" and "Funny Lady."



AP

In this Aug. 29, 2004 file photo, Farrah Fawcett arrives for the MTV Video Music Awards in Miami.

Judge: Hatch can't travel for latest 'Survivor'

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP)—A federal judge in Rhode Island says "Survivor" winner Richard Hatch cannot leave home confinement early to star in a 10th anniversary edition of the reality show in Samoa.

Hatch was convicted in 2006 of failing to pay taxes on the $1 million he won on the debut season of the CBS reality show. He spent about three years in federal prison and is serving the final 90 days of his sentence on home confinement in Newport.

Hatch last week asked a federal judge for permission to leave for Samoa next month, when filming begins. He argued that any money he earns from the show can pay his tax obligations.

But U.S. District Judge William Smith denied Hatch's request on Friday.

A public telephone listing for Hatch could not immediately be found.



In this Jan. 24, 2006 file photo, Richard Hatch, who won the first "Survivor" television program, departs federal court in Providence, R.I.

AP

Patricia Arquette dismisses divorce case

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Patricia Arquette and Thomas Jane will remain married.

Court records show the "Medium" star requested and was granted a dismissal of the couple's divorce case, which she filed in January.

The one-page dismissal didn't indicate a reason for the 41-year-old actress seeking a dismissal. Records show her request was filed on Tuesday and approved on Thursday.

The couple was married in May 2006 and have a daughter, Harlow Olivia Calliope Jane.

Arquette won an Emmy Award in 2005 for her portrayal of a paranormal expert on "Medium." The 40-year-old Jane appeared in the 2007 film "The Mist" and 2004's "The Punisher," and he stars in the new HBO series "Hung."



In this Feb. 12, 2009 file photo, Actress Patricia Arquette arrives at a presentation of her directorial debut of an upcoming episode of 'Medium' at The Paley Center for Media in New York.

AP

Maura Tierney having operation to rid breast tumor

NEW YORK (AP)—Actress Maura Tierney (MOHR'-uh TEER'-nee) says she's having surgery to remove a tumor in her breast.

Tierney, who recently wrapped a long-running stint on the NBC medical drama "ER," issued a statement about the surgery on Monday, giving no details on her condition and when she'd due to have the operation.

Says Tierney: "I will not know either my exact diagnosis or course of treatment until that surgery is performed."

Tierney says her doctors assured her "this is a very treatable condition," and she's "very optimistic as to the outcome."

Tierney's setback has delayed production on her new NBC series "Parenthood" for eight weeks. The network said the medical drama "Mercy" will instead premiere this fall

Daughter's careless decision is cautionary tale for others



DearAbby

DEAR ABBY: My daughter, age 15, was just diagnosed with the herpes virus, and she is devastated by the news. I had cautioned her to wait until she was older to become sexually active because I understand that decisions made in haste cannot be unmade, and some—as in this case—carry lifelong consequences. I also know that many, if not all, teenage girls do not cope very well with all the baggage that goes along with having sex.

At the time we had that discussion my daughter brushed me off. She said I couldn't look at the situation clearly because my feelings were influenced by my own mistakes and regrets. Now she sees that I knew what I was talking about.

Besides having to deal with a lifelong contagious disease and the possibility of infecting someone else, she has to deal with her irresponsible boyfriend who is threatening to tell people that they are infected and it's all her fault.

Please tell me what I can do to protect my daughter from further harm. And please caution other teens about the risks of unprotected sex while letting them know that moms and dads really DO know what is best for them.

DEVASTATED MOM IN OHIO

DEAR MOM: It isn't enough to tell young men and women to wait until they are older to have sex. In addition to that message they need to know how to protect themselves against an unplanned pregnancy, about the risk of contracting a sexually transmitted disease (STD) and how to prevent it if they do become sexually active, and how to recognize the symptoms if they do get one so it can be promptly treated.

The rate of STDs in teens today is very high. It is estimated that one in four young women in the U.S. ages 14 to 19 is infected with at least one common STD including herpes, HPV, chlamydia and trich (trichomoniasis).

Most STDs often have no symptoms—until there are more serious complications. Left untreated, some can make it difficult to conceive in adulthood.

Teens who are sexually active should have an STD checkup at least once a year. And any teen who thinks she—or he—might have an STD or learns that a sex partner has one should go and get tested right away.

Because there have been financial cutbacks in education, comprehensive sex education classes are being—and have been—eliminated. I publish a booklet, "What Every Teen Should Know," that is frank, informative and answers many of the questions teens ask about drugs, alcohol and sex. Many parents find conversations about sex difficult to start, and my booklet has helped many parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents start the discussion.

It can be ordered by sending your name and address, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Vernon, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

You asked me how to protect your daughter now that her boyfriend is threatening to say this is all her fault. Much as you might wish to, you can't muzzle the young man. You can have a chat with his parents and let them impress upon their son how unwise that kind of slander would be for both of them. And that's what I'm advising you to do.

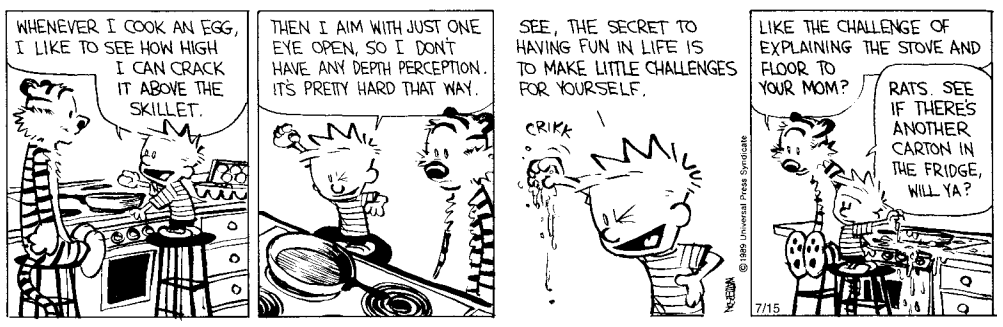
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

(EDITORS: If you have editorial questions, please contact Sue Roush, sroush(at)amuniversal.com.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



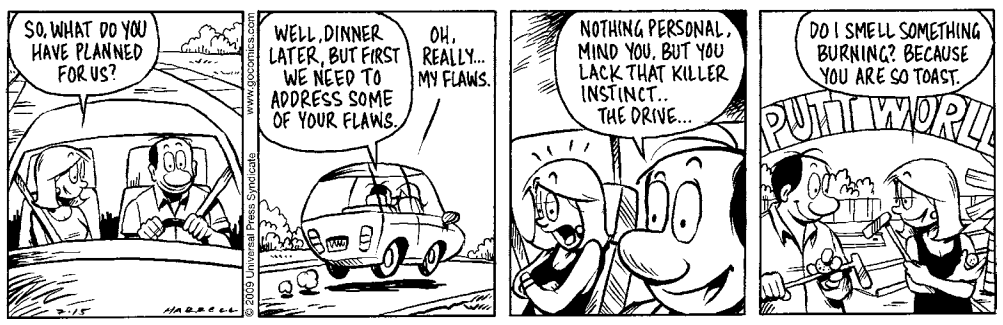
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



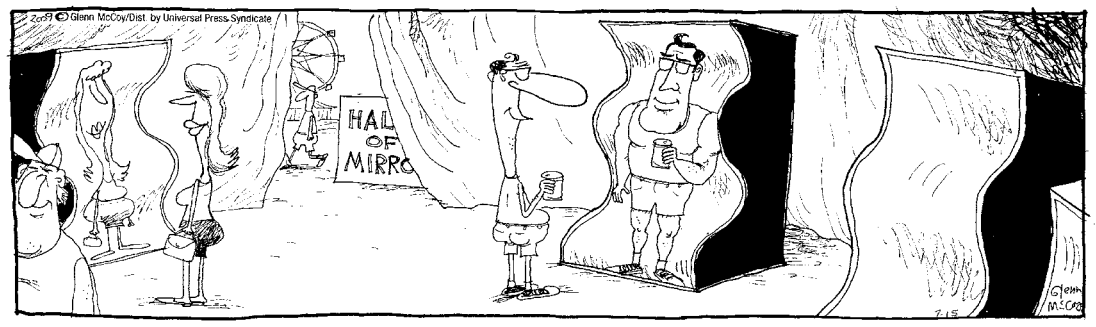
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

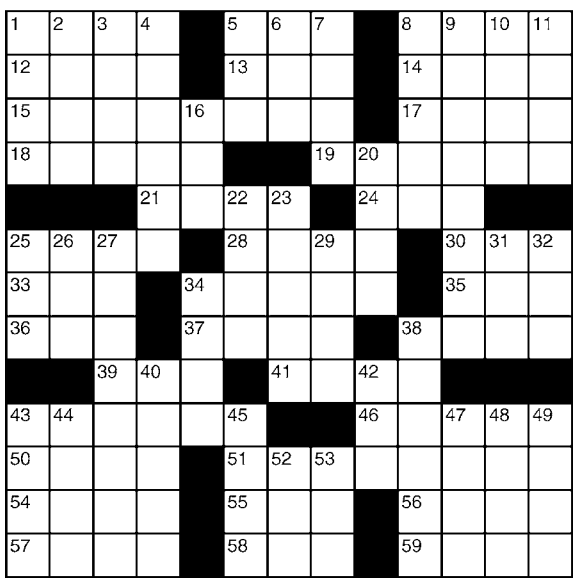
ACROSS
1 Otherwise
5 Sushi offering
8 Rue the run
12 First slayer
13 Pint in a pub
14 Crucifix
15 Looker
17 North Sea feeder
18 Actor Davis
19 Connective tissue
21 Dalai —
24 Ungraceful one
25 Doily feature
28 It takes the cake
30 Corn spike
33 Past
34 Rorschach images
35 Historic time
36 Solidify
37 Valhalla VIP
38 Mulligan, for one
39 "CSI" find
41 Moist
43 Secret Service agent, often
46 Run off to marry
50 Therefore
51 Trouble
54 Doves' home
55 Big bother
56 Men-only
57 Pianist Dame Myra
58 Infinitesimal
59 "Bonanza" role

DOWN
1 Reverberate
2 Cambodia neighbor
3 Perches
4 Store fodder
5 Water (Fr.)
6 2003 Will Ferrell movie
7 Remaining
8 Where the action is
9 Strong apprehension
10 Bum
11 Paradise
16 Afternoon social
20 A really long time
22 Jell-O creation
23 Duck
25 Trail behind
26 Time of your life?
27 Deli assortment
29 Sicilian spouter
31 "You — There"
32 Uncivilized
34 Wild porker
38 1984 Tom Hanks movie
40 Attendance count?
42 Kitten's call
43 Leave a good impression?
44 Old woman's home?
45 Spring occurrence
47 Sgt. Snorkel's dog
48 Carrots' partners
49 Work units
52 Praise in verse
53 Pirouette pivot

Solution time: 21 mins.

B	A	L	M	■	O	F	F	■	R	O	M	P
I	D	E	A	■	L	E	I	■	E	R	I	E
G	O	O	D	N	E	W	S	■	F	A	C	E
■	■	■	M	U	G	■	H	A	U	L	E	R
P	E	C	A	N	■	T	H	I	N	■	■	■
R	U	I	N	■	G	O	O	D	D	E	A	L
I	R	A	■	A	E	R	O	S	■	R	H	O
G	O	O	D	B	O	O	K	■	A	G	E	D
■	■	■	E	E	L	S	■	G	N	O	M	E
E	S	C	U	D	O	■	H	A	G	■	■	■
T	A	L	C	■	G	O	O	D	L	U	C	K
A	L	O	E	■	I	R	E	■	E	T	U	I
L	E	G	S	■	C	B	S	■	R	E	E	D

Yesterday's answer 7-15



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Emily Roeske, 18; Brian Austin Green, 36; Forest Whitaker, 48; Linda Ronstadt, 63

Happy Birthday: Embrace the new and the unknown and hold onto the things and the people you treasure the most. Once you start taking care of your own needs instead of putting everyone else first, you will do better. Financial gains will help you follow your dreams. Your numbers are 3, 7, 19, 23, 26, 37, 41

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Rise above whatever obstacles are put in your way. You have no time to waste, so avoid anyone who is looking for an argument. Completing what you start will lead to your success. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You will lose track of what's important if you don't keep things out in the open. Don't allow room for misinformation or you will end up in a critical state that will be difficult to alter. Your family will be counting on you. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Calm down and be observant if you want to get ahead. Fully understanding what everyone else is doing will enable you to maneuver yourself into a key position. If you come across as overly opinionated, you may provoke an enemy. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You are likely to encounter someone who is trying to sell you something you don't really need. Take care of your responsibilities and stick close to home in order to avoid being taken advantage of by someone desperate and difficult to deal with. ✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Simplicity will win in the end. You can develop an interesting deal with someone who can lead to financial gains. Your influence will be greater than you realize. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Tighten your budget and prepare to read the riot act to anyone in your circle who is being frivolous. Expect to face adversity and deal with it head on. The less of an edge you give any opposition you face, the better you will do. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Take care of any personal problems you face before they get too difficult to handle and interfere with what you need to accomplish. Work alongside the people who have the most to offer and you will make your own job much easier. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Be aware of the possibilities in order to stay on top of what's going on. You will discover something beneficial to your future by observing the way someone handles a situation now. New beginnings are apparent. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): It's who you meet and know that will help you get what you want in the end. Getting out and networking will lead to someone who can aid you in achieving your goals. A sudden change will take you by surprise. Use it to your advantage. ✪✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Step back from whatever situation you've been facing and view it from another angle. Once you get a chance to rethink what's going on, you can make a positive assessment and act accordingly. Your responsible attitude will help you come out on top. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Keep an open mind and a close eye on what's going on around you. Someone may not be looking out for your interests and could easily use emotional tactics to get something from you. Proceed with caution. Love relationships will be difficult but worth fighting for. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Something that happened in your past will motivate you to move forward with one of your old plans. Touch base with the people who inspired you the first time around. The timing is much better now. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are determined, aggressive and original. You have strong views but will always listen to reason. You are adaptable and persuasive.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	2	3			1	9	8	6
6			3					5
4			5					7
2			1				9	
	8	5					4	
9			2			6		
1			8			2		
8			6		9			
	9	6			4			

Difficulty Level ★★★ 7/15

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

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Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	2	7	9	5	3	1	4	8
5	9	3	4	8	1	2	6	7
4	1	8	6	2	7	9	5	3
9	3	2	5	7	6	4	8	1
8	5	6	2	1	4	3	7	9
7	4	1	8	3	9	6	2	5
3	6	5	7	9	2	8	1	4
2	7	9	1	4	8	5	3	6
1	8	4	3	6	5	7	9	2

Difficulty Level ★★ 7/14

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

TACOS **Solution: 7 letters**

D	E	T	A	G	N	O	L	E	T	A	L	P	E	L
W	O	G	R	I	L	L	S	I	L	I	H	C	G	L
S	H	R	E	D	D	E	D	P	I	N	C	H	A	E
S	T	E	A	K	S	M	M	Ⓚ	Ⓞ	Ⓞ	Ⓒ	E	S	H
T	T	A	A	D	E	R	H	A	R	D	O	E	U	S
S	E	S	O	T	O	S	V	E	I	E	N	S	A	N
A	K	E	A	U	A	N	U	E	R	Z	T	E	S	O
F	R	L	N	L	E	Q	L	L	A	G	E	D	T	I
K	A	D	S	E	A	O	U	G	N	R	N	I	O	N
A	M	A	W	T	M	D	N	I	O	A	T	B	R	O
E	R	T	P	A	E	I	F	D	T	A	S	L	T	T
R	E	U	C	C	L	F	A	S	C	O	T	E	I	A
B	P	A	I	L	U	S	R	O	D	N	E	V	L	M
M	U	L	I	T	A	O	C	A	B	R	A	B	L	O
G	S	F	S	E	A	S	O	N	E	D	M	E	A	T

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Asador, Barbacoa, Between, Breakfast, Cheese, Chili, Contents, Cook, Dorado, Edible, Elongated, Filling, Flauta, Grease, Grills, Guacamole, Hard, Maize, Meat, Metal, Mulita, Onions, Pinch, Plate, Round, Salsa, Sausage, Seasoned, Shell, Shredded, Sliced, Stands, Steaks, Steam, Stuffing, Supermarket, Taco, Taquero, Taquito, Tomato, Tortilla, Vendor, Wheat

Yesterday's Answer: Bluff

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Prince Fielder wins Home Run Derby

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Prince Fielder beat the hometown boppers on their own turf.

With Albert Pujols and Ryan Howard eliminated early, Fielder won baseball's Home Run Derby on Monday night with a steady power display that included a jaw-dropping drive estimated at 503 feet.

The Milwaukee Brewers' first baseman outslugged Texas outfielder Nelson Cruz 6-5 in the finals at Busch Stadium to take home a title that St. Louis fans surely hoped would go to one of their own.

"It's what I expected. This is Albert's stadium and Ryan is from here," Fielder said. "I was just happy I was able to put on a show and I'm glad I won."

Pujols, the Cardinals' big first baseman, and Howard, who grew up in the Gateway City, were knocked out in the second round.

This year's All-Star festivities were supposed to belong to Pujols in his home ballpark. But Fielder snatched the spotlight in the annual warmup for Tuesday night's Midsummer Classic.

With three outs remaining in the final round, Fielder smacked a drive onto the grassy hill in center field to clinch the crown. He posed for a moment with his bat held high, then embraced Brewers teammate Ryan Braun near home plate.

Pujols, who leads the majors with 32 homers, needed a late rally just to avoid elimination in the first round. With one out to work with, he connected on consecutive swings to force a three-player swing-off for the final spot in round 2, sending the red-clad crowd of 45,981 into a high-fiving frenzy.

One fan in the bleachers lent a helping hand, too, appearing to reach over the fence in right-center to catch one of Pujols' homers. During a game it might have been ruled fan interference, but there's no video replay in the derby.

Carlos Pena hit one homer in the five-swing tie-breaker and Joe Mauer was shut out. So when Pujols homered twice he moved on—but not for long.

Looking tired, he managed six homers next time up for a two-round total of 11, easily surpassed by Fielder, Cruz and Howard, the 2006 derby champ.

"I wish I would have put a better show for our fans," Pujols said. "I was nervous a little bit."

After his final swing, he received a warm ovation anyway.

"Thank you so much for your support," Pujols told the crowd.

The two-time MVP also failed to come through for a fan right before the contest. With a chance to win an attractive prize package, Mark Weinberger of Philadelphia pointed to left field a couple of times—calling Pujols' shot.

Alas, the St. Louis slugger was unable to clear the fences.

Fielder hit the longest shot of the night, a 503-foot drive to right-center that disappeared between two sections of bleachers.

During the first round, Cruz hit a drive into the fourth deck in left field, never accomplished during a game at 4-year-old Busch Stadium.

Fielder and Cruz both have 22 home runs. Cruz, enjoying a breakout season, was a late addition to the All-Star roster because of an injury to Los Angeles Angels outfielder Torii Hunter

Brandon Inge, Adrian Gonzalez, Pena and Mauer were knocked out in the first round. Inge, the Detroit Tigers' 5-foot-11 third baseman, became the eighth contestant to get shut out since the current format was adopted in 1996. Jason Bay was the previous one in 2005.

None of the participants were able to match Josh Hamilton's amazing performance last year at Yankee Stadium, where he hit a record 28 homers in the first round—including 13 in a row.

Despite an injury-plagued first half, Hamilton was elected by fans to start in the outfield Tuesday night. But he skipped the derby this time, honoring a request by Texas manager Ron Washington.

Minnesota slugger Justin Morneau, the 2008 derby champion, also sat out.



National League's Prince Fielder of the Milwaukee Brewers holds his trophy after winning the MLB baseball Home Run Derby in St. Louis, Monday, July 13, 2009.

AP

Lincecum, Halladay to start All-Star game

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Tim Lincecum and Roy Halladay were selected Monday as the starting pitchers for the All-Star game.

Last year's NL Cy Young Award winner, Lincecum is 10-2 with a 2.33 ERA for the San Francisco Giants. He will get the ball Tuesday night at Busch Stadium, NL manager Charlie Manuel announced.

Lincecum made the All-Star team for last season's game at Yankee Stadium but was unable to pitch because he was ill.

"This is a great accomplishment for me," Lincecum said, his long, shaggy hair protruding from under a black knit cap. "I think tomorrow the big thing is going to be just getting to the field. And after that, just getting on the field."

Halladay, 10-3 with a 2.85 ERA for the Toronto Blue Jays, was chosen by AL manager Joe Maddon.

This is Halladay's sixth All-Star appearance, but his first chance to start - and it could be his final trip in a Toronto uniform.

Blue Jays general manager J.P. Ricciardi said last week he'll listen to trade offers for the 2003 AL Cy Young Award winner, who is signed through 2010 and would have to agree to a deal.

At a news conference Monday, broadcaster Bob Costas called Halladay a member of the Blue Jays "at least for the moment," which drew a round of uneasy chuckles.

"It's tough. Obviously, I'm somewhere that I enjoy being and have spent my entire career. There's a lot, I think, that goes into it," Halladay said. "I think as a player, there's that will to win, that will to do it in October and basically that's what all of this has been about. I would like that chance. I'm not saying it won't be Toronto. You'd like to be three games up in first place and not have to deal with it."

Lincecum and Halladay each pitched Thursday, so both will be on their regular four days of rest.

In his most recent outing against San Diego, Lincecum carried a no-hit bid into the seventh inning and won his fourth straight outing.

Halladay, who has won more games than any other major league pitcher since 2002, has made three starts since returning from a stint on the disabled list with a groin strain. Maddon's Tampa Bay Rays are 5-3 against the two-time 20-game winner over the last two-plus seasons.

"I see him way too often," Maddon said.

Manuel chose one of his own Phillies players, Gold Glove winner Shane Victorino, to start in center field in place of injured Carlos Beltran, who was elected by fans.

"I wanted a guy that had played center field, was a true center fielder to put out there," Manuel said.

Florida shortstop Hanley Ramirez will lead off for the NL, followed by Philadelphia second baseman Chase Utley, St. Louis first baseman Albert Pujols and Milwaukee slugger Ryan Braun in right. Raul Ibanez of the Phillies will be in left and bat fifth, in front of Mets third baseman David Wright, Victorino, Cardinals catcher Yadier Molina and Lincecum.

Lincecum, a boyish-looking right-hander, is tied for the major league lead with 149 strikeouts. He was asked if he would take any precautions to make sure he doesn't get sick again this year. He said he would load up on fluids to stay hydrated and have Giants teammate Matt Cain "put a leash around my neck, keep me in a room."

For the AL, Seattle right fielder Ichiro Suzuki leads off and Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter is in the No. 2 hole. Minnesota catcher Joe Mauer bats third, followed by New York first baseman Mark Teixeira, Boston left fielder Jason Bay, Texas center fielder Josh Hamilton, Tampa Bay third baseman Evan Longoria, Toronto second baseman Aaron Hill and Halladay.

"It's just a great honor for me and I'm extremely excited," Halladay said. "A highlight moment for me in my career, so thank you."

Hill will start in place of Boston's Dustin Pedroia, last year's league MVP. Pedroia's wife, Kelli, is seven months pregnant and has been in the hospital since Monday with complications.

Halladay was chosen to start over Kansas City ace Zack Greinke, among others. Greinke is 10-5 with an AL-best 2.12 ERA.

"I think Doc over the last several years has demonstrated to be possibly the best pitcher in the American League," Maddon said. "Just based on this season and a body of work, I thought that he deserved the nod."

David Wells was the last Toronto pitcher to start an All-Star game, in 2000. San Francisco sent Jason Schmidt to the mound six years ago.

Agents pressing union to file collusion grievance

ST. LOUIS (AP)—As Michael Weiner prepares to take over from Donald Fehr as head of the players' association, several agents are pushing the union to file a collusion grievance against teams over their behavior during the free-agent market last winter.

"There's a general level of suspicion in the air," said Jeff Borris, an agent whose clients include Barry Bonds, Brian Fuentes and Jason Isringhausen.

The decision on whether to go ahead with a grievance will be one of the first major decisions for the union since Fehr announced his pending retirement last month and its executive board recommended Weiner, the union's general counsel, for the top job.

"The investigation is ongoing but not complete because of things to review," Weiner said Monday before the All-Star Home Run Derby. "We've had some discussions with the commissioner's office. I'll know more I think by the end of the month."

Halfway through the season, agents also are worried about collusion because no major players eligible for free agency have agreed to contract extensions.

"There are too many things that need to be explained," said Seth Levinson, who represented nearly a dozen free agents following the 2008 season. "In my experience, there are no coincidences in a monopoly."

Weiner, who will take over from Fehr between the end of this season and the start of the 2010 schedule, struck a more cautious note.

"The new market will be what it's going to be," he said.

Contador plays down tensions with Armstrong

LIMOGES,France (AP) — Alberto Contador is playing down tensions between him and Lance Armstrong at the Tour de France, but the issue over the lack of leadership within Astana's team will continue so long as the two former champions are fighting for the yellow jersey.

On Sunday, the 37-year-old Armstrong told French television that relations between him and the 26-year-old Spanish rider are strained after just nine stages of the showcase race.

Responding to the Texan's comments during Monday's rest day in Limoges, Contador said: "It's a subject which is starting to tire me a bit, it's too repetitive. For me there are no tensions, I am totally relaxed and focused on the competition."

Armstrong, a seven-time straight Tour champion between 1999-2005, is aiming for an improbable eighth win. Contador, unable to defend his 2007 title last year because of Astana's team ban, is desperate to add to his growing legacy.

He has already won all three Grand Tours of France, Italy and Spain—something Armstrong has not achieved.

Outwardly, neither rider admits they want to fight the other, and both have claimed they are prepared to sacrifice individual ambition for the greater good of the Astana team.

"We eat together at the table and are together on the bus. Often the tension seems higher from the outside than it really is," Contador said. "The Tour is a tiring race and you can't waste energy on things that don't concern the race."

But undoubtedly both share the same burning inner ambition, and clearly want to win the Tour again.

Ahead of Tuesday's 10th stage, Contador was in second place, two seconds ahead of Armstrong in third place. Rinaldo Nocentini of Italy held the yellow jersey overnight, six seconds ahead of Contador.



AP

American seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong, left, and teammate and rival Alberto Contador of Spain, right, climb towards Col de Port , France, during the 8th stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 176.5 kilometers (109.7 miles) with start in Andorra and finish in Saint-Girons, France, Saturday July 11, 2009.

Those positions seem unlikely to change on three largely flat stages from Tuesday to Thursday, or on Friday's moderately hard mountain stage—so the Tour's most intriguing duel should take a back seat at least for a few days.

In his televised interview Sunday, Armstrong applied pressure on Contador by insisting he would not settle for third place overall, and explained that "the honest truth is that there is a little tension" between him and Contador.

The reaction from his Spanish teammate on Monday was to cite several riders as Tour contenders—but not Armstrong.

"I think the most dangerous rivals are the Schleck brothers (Frank and Andy), they are well focused on the race," Contador said. "Cadel Evans is the only one to have attacked, and Carlos Sastre, he has a lot of experience."

The friction between Armstrong and Contador, simmering under the surface before the Tour, came fully to light Friday.

With Astana controlling the peloton and rivals unwilling to attack, it seemed like the seventh stage would grind to an uneventful halt. But Contador could not hold back and attacked late into the final climb up to the Pyrenean ski resort of Arcalis, zooming past Armstrong like the Texan used to do to rivals in his heyday.

Armstrong, respecting cycling etiquette not to chase a teammate, lost ground in the general classification to Contador. After the stage, Armstrong was critical of the Spaniard's attack, saying it was not part of team orders.

But orders for who, seeing as there is no outright leader in Johan Bruyneel's team?

"There's a difference between what's said in the team bus and what happens in the race," Contador said Monday, maintaining he had done nothing wrong. "They are different circumstances, I saw I could attack and I did, thinking about what benefit it would have for the team and to take advantage of the situation."

Fielding endless questions about a rift with Armstrong, Contador eventually admitted he wished things were different.

"If I was the clear leader of the team, there would be none of the controversy surrounding my attack in Arcalis," he said. "It's true that the situation could be simpler, and I could focus exclusively on my (riding)."

Intriguingly, he threw down the gauntlet for the Tour's final, grueling, week.

"The race will be very hectic in the Alps and things will become clearer," he said.

NBA BRIEFS

McGrady switching jersey numbers

HOUSTON (AP)—Houston Rockets star Tracy McGrady will swap his No. 1 uniform number for No. 3. McGrady's old number will go to new teammate Trevor Ariza, the Lakers forward who agreed to a multiyear deal with Houston on July 2. McGrady wore No. 3 in high school. He is making the switch to promote his humanitarian efforts in the Darfur region of the Sudan and a documentary on his summer 2007 visits to refugee camps in the region. The documentary, "3 Points," is set for release this fall. The title refers to goals of peace, protection and punishment. McGrady has donated $75,000 to a humanitarian project in Darfur. He had microfracture surgery on his left knee in late February. Doctors say he needs up to 12 months to recover.

Magic match offer from Mavs to retain Gortat

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—The Orlando Magic have retained backup center Marcin Gortat, matching the $34 million, five-year deal offered by the Dallas Mavericks to the restricted free agent. The Magic made the announcement Monday. Gortat averaged 3.8 points and 4.5 rebounds in about 12 minutes per game last season as a solid backup to Dwight Howard. Dallas was targeting Gortat as a backup to Erick Dampier or possibly his eventual replacement because of Dampier's expiring contract. Gortat's return solidifies the Magic frontcourt for next season, with the team signing former Mavericks power forward Brandon Bass last week. "Having quality big men is an absolute must in our league, and Marcin has worked very hard to fit into that category," Magic general manager Otis Smith said in a statement. "He provides tremendous depth to our frontcourt and we're happy to bring him back."

Suns reach agreement on signing Frye

PHOENIX (AP)—The Phoenix Suns have reached a contract agreement with free-agent center Channing Frye. The team scheduled a news conference Tuesday to introduce the former University of Arizona star. Frye agreed to a two-year contract with the second year at his option. He will earn about $2 million next season. The 6-foot-11 Frye is entering his fifth NBA season. He has averaged 8.2 points per game in two seasons with the New York Knicks and the last two with the Portland Trail Blazers. He averaged just 4.2 points last season.

Nuggets acquire Afflalo, Sharpe from Pistons

DENVER (AP)—The Denver Nuggets acquired Arron Afflalo and Walter Sharpe from Detroit on Monday in exchange for a future second-round draft pick. The Nuggets also received cash in the deal. The Pistons freed up close to $1.8 million in salary cap space. Afflalo averaged 4.9 points in 74 games last season. The former UCLA star scored a career-high 24 at Houston on March 18. Sharpe played in eight games with the Pistons last season. He also appeared in four with Fort Wayne of the NBA Development League. The 6-foot-9 forward was taken by the Seattle Sonics in the second round of the 2008 draft, before being dealt to Detroit later that night.

Cavaliers sign veteran swingman Anthony Parker

INDEPENDENCE, Ohio (AP)—Anthony Parker's fondest basketball memories came overseas, where he won three Euroleague championships and twice was named league MVP. After signing Monday with the Cleveland Cavaliers, Parker believes he has a legitimate shot at winning his first NBA title. "For me it's always about who really saw me fitting in with what they're trying to do," Parker said. "Cleveland has been that team from the beginning. They showed the most interest and pursued me the hardest. It just so happens they're also a team that's contending, which is even better. It was a fit all the way through." Parker, 34, signed a two-year deal worth about $6 million. He averaged 10.7 points and 3.4 assists in 80 games for the Toronto Raptors last season. At 6-foot-6, he provides the type of length the Cavaliers have been searching for in a perimeter defender.

Hawks announce deals with Bibby, Pachulia

ATLANTA (AP)—The Atlanta Hawks have officially announced new deals to re-sign unrestricted free agents Mike Bibby and Zaza Pachulia. Hawks coach Mike Woodson said the two are returning to "finish what we started" after leading the team to two straight playoff appearances. Terms of the deals, first reported last week, were not announced Monday. Bibby resolved a problem at point guard when he was acquired during the 2007-08 season. Pachulia has been a starter or top backup at center for four seasons. Woodson said he hopes the team re-signs forward Marvin Williams, a restricted free agent.

Pargo returns to Bulls with one-year deal

CHICAGO (AP)—Free agent guard Jannero Pargo has signed a one-year deal with the Chicago Bulls. Terms were not disclosed Monday. The 6-foot-1 guard, known for his outside shooting, was also with Chicago from 2003-06. Pargo played in Russia and Greece last season. He is a six-year NBA veteran, having also spent time with the Lakers, Raptors and Hornets. He has averaged 6.9 points in 316 regular-season games, while shooting 36.5 percent from the 3-point line. In 33 playoff games, his average is 6.5 points and 36.8 percent on 3-pointers. Pargo gives the Bulls backcourt depth after they lost leading scorer Ben Gordon to Detroit.

Shirley's caging semifinals on tonight

UFO games cancelled

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The two semifinal matches in the 2009 Inaugural Shirley's Coffee Shop Invitational Basketball League will be played tonight at the JP Center Basketball Court in Garapan.

Pennant champion G4S will duel Micronesian Brokers, Inc. in the first game at 6:30pm, while second ranked Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan will collide with Advance X-Terminators in the second match at 8pm.

The semifinals pairings were originally set for last Monday, but games were cancelled due to rain.

With Shirley's caging playing its semifinals at the JP Center tonight, games in the UFO league scheduled for today have been called off and will be rescheduled on a later date.

MBI and Advance booked the last two semifinals berths in the inaugural caging after beating separate foes last Friday.

R.J. Nonato exploded for 45 points to lift MBI to an 82-76 win.

Rocyl Ritual was also on fire in the first round of the playoffs, drilling 31 markers in the X-Terminators' 80-73 victory over Pacific Trading, Co.

Winners of tonight's pair of semifinal games will advance to the best-of-three championship series, which will begin this Friday if weather permits.

G4S and Fiesta are favored in the semifinals, having beaten their foes twice in the regular season.

G4S took the No. 1 seeding in the six-team field after capping the regular season with an 8-2 record. Actually, Fiesta tied G4S, but the latter won in the quotient system after winning against the former in their first meeting, 84-60. Fiesta prevailed in their second duel, 78-67.

The X-Terminators took the No. 3 spot with their 6-4 record. MBI and Shirley's had identical 3-7 records in the regular season, but the former took fourth place after winning against the latter twice in the regular season. PTC had a 1-9 mark, posting its only win against Fiesta in a double-overtime game, 96-89.

After the completion of the league, organizer will give awards to the first three finishers and top individual performers, namely the members of the Mythical Five and regular season and Finals MVP. Leaders in rebounds, assists, steals, points, three-pointers, and blocks will also be feted.

The awards banquet was originally set for July 21, but is likely to be rescheduled due to the cancellation of games.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
MBI's Art Trajano eludes Shirley's defenders during their playoff game in the Shirley's caging last Friday at the JP Center Basketball Court.

Roque fundraiser meeting tonight

Members of the softball and baseball community will be holding their second fundraising tournament for former Saipan Little League Baseball statistician Roque Celis this weekend at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

Interested teams are asked to attend a meeting tonight at 6:30pm at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Proceeds from the tournament will be used for the medical expenses of Celis, who was brought to hospital in the Philippines after he was paralyzed (waist down) in May.

Before he became ill, Celis helped out in keeping statistics for the Big, Senior, and Junior League divisions in the last 2009 SLLB season.

"We are calling on the public, especially the softball and baseball community to come out and help Roque and his family. Roque in the past several years has been a big help to baseball and softball, now it's our turn to reciprocate his kindness," said Janece Camacho, one of the organizers of the fundraiser.

Camacho added those who would not be able to play, but still would like to give donations are welcome.

Organizers are looking to have 12 teams in the tournament that will run from Friday to Sunday. Tournament format will be double elimination with winners receiving in-kind prizes from donors. The entry fee is $150 and the tournament is co-ed.

Yo' Mama ruled the first fundraising tournament after thwarting Ur Balls in Game 2 of the finals, 11-8,

For more information, contact Camacho at 789-7570 or Roy Celis at 285-9479. ***(Roselyn B. Monroyo)***

RGA releases Cook Islands fundraising sked

The Refaluwasch Golf Association has scheduled a series of fundraisers to help send the CNMI National Golf Team to the 2009 Pacific Mini Games in Rarotonga, Cook Islands.

RGA president Jordon Kossam said the first Pacific Mini Games golf fundraiser is set for Aug. 16 at the Coral Ocean Point Golf Resort. Tournament fee is $40 exclusive of green fee, while check in and tee times will be announced on a later date.

"The format will be low net category. Winners will be based on the number of participants. It is the same format that we utilized in our regular monthly tournaments," said Kossam.

The Aug. 16 tournament will serve as an appetizer for the much bigger golf fundraiser set on Sept. 5, added Kossam.



Kossam

"We are targeting Sept. 5, 2009 as the main golf tournament fundraiser. The venue and format of this tournament have yet to be finalized. We should release more information soon," he said.

The series of golf fundraisers will be capped by a luncheon fundraiser scheduled for Sept. 10, 2009, at Kilili Beach Park with additional information be released as the event gets closer.

"The Pacific Mini Games is just around the corner and we are working extra hard to meet our goals. We would like to encourage our golf communities and supporters to kindly come out and help support our efforts of representing the CNMI during this Games," said Kossam.

Making up the 2009 Pacific Games CNMI National Golf team are Ralph Yumul, Jess Wabol, Ben Duenas, and Carl Hocog. Aside from the four players, a coach will also be traveling with the team to Cook Islands, which will host the Games from Sept. 21 to Oct. 2.

Joe Demapan will serve as an alternate if one of the four, for whatever reason, is not able to represent the CNMI in the Mini Games.

Aside from RGA's fundraisers, Kossam said the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association had promised to shoulder a portion of the travel and per diem cost of the team to Rarotonga.

For more information regarding the CNMI National Golf Team, contact Kossam at 483-4506. ***(Mark Rabago)***

KENSUKE

From Page 28

Kimura will be competing in this summer. He left Saipan on July 8 for a month-long tournament and training with Japanese junior swimmers.

Kensuke Kimura's next tournament will be the Shizuoka Junior Championships scheduled for July 23, and he will cap his Japan trip through the Junior Olympics tournament slated for Aug. 2.

"After the meet in Western Shizuoka, he will practice with Shizuoka Junior team for three weeks. They practice nine times a week. Every practice is between two to three hours," Hiro Kimura said.

"In his next meet which will be held at the Shizuoka International Swimming Stadium, we are looking forward to hearing good results from Kensuke, again," the older Kimura said.

CNMI

From Page 28

Down Under cagers defeated New Caledonia in the men's finals, 62-44, while the Aussies cagebelles topped New Zealand in the women's gold medal game, 68-45.

New Zealand, which finished fourth in the men's division, is ranked second overall with its combined 1,370, while Fiji is in third place with a total of 478.5 points.

Fiji failed to gain additional points after withdrawing from last month's tournament.

Completing the Top 10 are New Caledonia (392.25), Guam (353.5), Samoa (183), Papua New Guinea (180.75), Tahiti (118.25), Palau (104), and American Samoa (84.5).

Tahiti and Palau also pulled out from the tournament Saipan hosted thus remained at the No. 8 and No. 9 spot, respectively.

FIBA Oceania board member and Basketball Association of Northern Mariana Islands secretary general Michael White was in charge of the production and maintenance of the FIBA Oceania ranking system.

The ranking system is similar to the one used by FIBA World to rank national teams in worldwide basis. The rankings are calculated within the scope of an eight-year cycle. For an event held every four years, such as the Olympics and Pacific Games, the last two competitions are taken into account. For biennial events, the last four are considered. For annual meets, the last eight are included on the list.

Each event is assigned a weight with the FIBA World Championships and Olympics getting the most points with five each. For each event, points are assigned based upon a team's placing.

A gold medal finish gives a team 50 points, 40 for silver, 30 for bronze, 15 for fourth, 12 for fifth, 10 for sixth, nine for seventh, nine for eighth, seven for ninth, six for 10th, five for 11th, four for 12th, third for 13th, and two for 14th, and one for 15th and 16th. The points earned by a team in an event are multiplied by the weight assigned to that event.

The current rankings are expected to change in a few months as several FIBA Oceania teams are playing in the FIBA U-19 Championships, which is being held in New Zealand and will conclude next week. More ranking points are at stake in September when the zone holds the FIBA Oceania Championships for Men and Women in Australia and New Zealand.

MIEKO

From Page 28

because I never done this long of a race and it will be a challenge for me physically and mentally. I just want to finish the race and represent Saipan and make more Japanese athletes come to Tagaman and the 2010 XTERRA Saipan Championship," she said.

Carey said she started training for Kaike immediately after returning from her stint in XTERRA Malaysia last month.

"There's is big difference between XTERRA and Kaike. XTERRA is MTB (mountain bike) and Kaike is road bike and full marathon. I tried to do long training which is four to five hours a day and think about nutrition a lot to make me strong and be able to train next day. Now I feel good and I'm ready. I'm very excited to do this race and race with many great athletes but also excited to get back to my mountain bike when I come back," she said.

Carey will be joined in the trip to Japan by Marianas Visitors Authority's Frank Tudela and Pacific Development, Inc. president Yoichi Matsumura.

The three will leave Saipan this Friday and will be away for three days. They will return to the CNMI on July 21.

In July 15, 2007, Carey finished 486th overall in the 27th Kaike Triathlon Championships after negotiating the 8.3-km run, 74-km bike, and marathon in 8:22:35.

Carey gave a good account of herself in the run portion of the duathlon as she finished 29th among the women. She also did well in the bike split as she ranked 23rd among the women.

Her husband Kevin, meanwhile, came in at 578th place following a time of 8:47:34. He finished 375th in the run and 421st in the bike split.

The Kaike Triathlon is the first triathlon held in Japan and began with 52 racers 28 years ago. Over time, the course has expanded to a 3-km swim, 145-km bike, and 42.195-km run and entries swelled to nearly 900 the past couple of years.

PBA

From Page 28

made it to the Top 5. They were Secret, Dukes, SBC/J's Restaurant and Jack's King.

Cash prizes were given to special awardees, too, in the team and individual divisions. Fiesta won in the high scratch and high handicap game and high scratch series and high handicap series.

Kitz Barja of Secret topped the high scratch game and high handicap, while Gigi Zapanta ruled the ladies' high handicap game and high handicap series. In the high scratch game, Yho Villavicencio prevailed, while Ron Cal took the high scratch series prize. Alex Cacdac and Tony Verdaguer triumphed in the high scratch series and high handicap series.

Talavera took his second individual award after posting the high average in the men's division. The high average in the women's division award belonged to Cal.

PBA also handed out Most Improved Bowlers awards, which went to Jess Delos Santos in the men's division and Mindy Taitano in the women's category.

Talavera added $350 to his earnings after winning Class A of the Classified Tournament. Joining him in the Top 6 and gaining cash prizes, too were Barja, Raul Dumaping, Percy Omechelang, Raphael Zapanta, and Alex Castro.

In Class B, the big winner was Ariel Dumapit, who pocketed $300. In second place was Simeon Eparwa, followed by Ronald Epan, Gina Sablan, Cris Balolong, Romy Guevarra, Roger Vales, and Ron Cal.

Lynn Santos earned $250 after ruling the Class C, while Mel Regis and Paul Bea took $125 and 80 for their runner-up and third place finishes, respectively.

PBA 2009 Awards Ceremony

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO



The Top 5 finishers in the PBA-Budweiser Bowler of the Year Tournament, from left, fifth placer Robert Talavera, fourth placer Lito Teodoro, champion Percy Omechelang, runner-up Simon Manacop, and third placer Raymond Zapanta.



Classified Tournament top winners, from left, Lynn Santos (Class C), Ariel Dumapit (Class B), and Robert Talavera (Class A) pose with their trophies and other prizes.



The Top 10 qualifiers for the PBA-Budweiser Bowler of the Year Tournament pose for a group photo last Sunday during an awards banquet at the Saipan Bowling Center.



PBA Saturday Night League runner-up Secret pose for a group photo.



Classified Class C champion Lynn Santos, right, is joined by runner-up Mel Regis during the awards ceremony.



Members of PBA Saturday Night League third place Dukes receive their trophy and cash prize.



Players of SBC/J's Restaurant show their fourth place trophy.



Two players from Jack's King receive their fifth place prizes.



Individual high average winners Robert Talavera and Ron Cal.



Class B winner Ariel Dumapit is flanked by third placer Ronald Epan, left, and runner-up Simeon Eparwa.



Prince Fielder wins Home Run Derby

With Albert Pujols and Ryan Howard eliminated early, Fielder won baseball's Home Run Derby on Monday night with a steady power display that included a jaw-dropping drive estimated at 503 feet. **24**

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Shirley's caging semifinals on tonight

The two semifinal matches in the 2009 Inaugural Shirley's Coffee Shop Invitational Basketball League will be played tonight at the JP Center Basketball Court in Garapan. **26**



Kensuke sets new personal best times

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Tsunami Saipan

Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan's Kensuke Kimura recorded two new personal best times in the 2009 Western Shizuoka Championships in Japan last Sunday.

Kimura timed in at two minutes, 33.02 seconds in the 200m individual medley and 5:23.17 in the 400m IM. Both times were faster than his previous best in the 11 to 12 age group. The Tsunami Saipan bet, who turned 13 on April 25, holds the record in the 400m IM in the 11 to 12 age group, clocking in at 5:35.70 on March 6, 2009.



Kensuke Kimura shows the certificates he received for placing second in the 400m IM and third in the 200m IM in the 2009 Western Shizuoka Championships in the Furuhashi Hironoshin Memorial Hamamatsu Swimming Pool in Japan last Sunday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

His 2:33.02 was only around six seconds behind the 2:26.46 mark of Joshua Taitano, who set the boys' 13 to 14 200m IM record on Aug. 19, 1995. Dean Palacios holds the 400m IM record in the 13 to 14 age group with 5:12.38.

Kensuke's time in the 400m IM was the second fastest in the tournament held at Tobio, one of the most popular swimming arenas in Japan. Tobio, which is also known as the Furuhashi Hironoshin Memorial Hamamatsu Swimming Pool, hosted the Japan National Championships held in May this year in Shinohara-cho, Nishi-ku.

The 13-year-old Tsunami Saipan swimmer then finished third in the 200m IM, outracing older junior high school student-swimmers in the meet.

"I was so surprised with these results, these good results. I am so glad to see a significant improvement with his times," Tsunami Saipan coach Hiro Kimura said.

The Western Shizuoka event was one of the three tournaments that Kensuke

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PBA fetes Saturday Night League and Classified Tournament victors

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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Cash prizes and trophies swarmed the Saipan Bowling Center as the Philippine Bowling Association held an awards banquet for the PBA Saturday Night League and Classified Tournament last Saturday.

In the PBA Saturday Night League, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan went home with the championship trophy and $650 cash prize.

The champion team is composed of Jerry Tan, Ross, Raymond, and Raphael Zapanta, Simon Manacop, and Alex Cacdac.

Also receiving trophies and cash prizes were the four other teams, which

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO

From left, Simon Manacop, Jerry Tan, Raphael and Raymond Zapanta, and Alex Cacdac of champion Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan receive their prizes for topping the PBA Saturday Night League.

CNMI improves FIBA Oceania rankings, Australia still tops list



CNMI Men's Nationals' Pete Iguel pulls up for a running jumper against Australia's Thomas Daly during their game in the 2009 FIBA Oceania Basketball Tournament at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium last month.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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The CNMI moved two notches higher in FIBA Oceania rankings, while Australia strengthened its hold of the No. 1 spot, following a sweep of the 2009 FIBA Oceania Basketball Tournament held on Saipan last month.

After playing four games each in the men's and women's divisions, the CNMI moved up to the No. 11 spot in the current combined rankings released by FIBA Oceania. The Commonwealth, which in the December 2008 rankings garnered 49.75 points for the No. 13 spot, now has 71.75 ranking points, finishing ahead of eight other FIBA Oceania-member nations.

The Rufino Aguon-mentored CNMI Men's Nationals gave the Commonwealth the biggest lift in the rankings as they moved up from No. 17 last December 2008 to No. 12 after last month's tournament. The CNMI totaled 13.5 points in last December's rankings and now has 26.5 points. The CNMI cagebelles kept the No. 11 spot in the women's division with their 45.25 points.

Australia, which in the December 2008 rankings earned 2,525 ranking points, now has 2, 519.75 after winning both the men's and women's divisions of the FIBA caging. The Land

See CNMI on Page 26

Mieko praying for good weather



Mieko Carey, seen here in a file photo, will take part in this Sunday's 29th Kaike Triathlon Championships.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Technically, Mieko Carey hasn't competed in the Kaike Triathlon Championships yet.

She and husband Kevin actually took part in the 27th staging of the event two years ago but a typhoon wiped out the 3-kilometer swim portion of the endurance race downgrading it to a mere duathlon.

That's why Carey is excited than ever to tackle the 3-kilometer swim, 145-km bike, and 42.195-km run triathlon this coming Sunday, July 19.

"I did this race two years ago but unfortunately there was a typhoon. The course was changed to a shorter course without a swim. Hopefully the weather is good this year. It will be the first time for me to join the long race," she said.

Carey, who is a yoga instructor by trade as well as an assistant coach for the Saipan Swim Club, said the sheer length of the course makes just finishing the 190.95-km triathlon a big accomplishment.

"I have no idea how well I will do

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